1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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County Clare

The groups usually designated are shown within blocks united under heavier margins. Thus those grouped in double black margin across the whole diagram, taking in all the generation marked horizontally as I and O, are ego's "friends." They are members of his generation, united by common descent reckoned back five generations to common great-great-grandparent. 602 612

It goes without saying, of course, that, except for minor variations, this system is essentially that of all northern and western Europe. It is that of the United States. It is technically a descriptive, bilateral, patrilineal system. Like all kinship systems without exception throughout the whole world, it provides for reckoning in a common scheme nine generations, five of which must already occupy the past. Like all others, it represents a self-consistent system built up of the relationships within the immediate family. 602 612 171

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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CHAPTER VI

Demography and Familism

OF the demographic phenomena the small farmers present, the decline of population is most easily isolated. The facts are as follows: There has been a continuous and characteristic decline since the great famine of 1845. Numbers have fallen from 6,548,000 in 1841 to 2,963,000 in 1926. With the exception of Dublin, the whole of the country has suffered in this decline. On the whole, however, the country districts have suffered at a greater rate than have the towns. In 1841, 80 per cent of the population was rural; today only 63 per cent. In other words, since 1841 there has been an almost continuous increase in the town population at the expense of the rural, though the two have shared a common decline. Put in terms of percentages: since 1841, the country districts have lost 64 per cent of their population, towns from 200 to 500 49 per cent, towns from 5,000 to 10,000 25 per cent, and towns other than Dublin over 10,000 13 per cent. Dublin, on the other hand, has gained 47 per cent. That the enormous emigration associated with this decline is a matter of the contemporary generation is evident when it is recognized that 30 per cent of the native-born Irish were living in other countries in 1926.

The closest approach among European countries is the case of Norway, where 15 per cent live outside. Italy, which has provided so many citizens for the United States and the

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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Argentine, has only 4 per cent of its natives residing in foreign countries. Since 1911 there has, however, been a check in the decrease; only 5 per cent of the population was lost between 1911 and 1926. The region of our investigation, County Clare, shares in this general loss, falling in population from 250,000 in 1841 to 95,000 in 1926. Since 1911 it has lost only 8 per cent.

As the statistics show, this loss of population is in the main a problem of the country districts. The towns have gained proportionately to the countryside; though in a lesser degree, they have, of course, shared the common loss. Many causes for this decline have been operative and, as the excellent work by Dr. William Forbes Adams, *Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World*,[1] shows, emigration is no new factor in Irish life. The great impetus for an enormous exodus of population was the famine of 1845, but since then emigration has flowed on continuously, coming to an end only in 1932 when for the first time for at least a century more Irishmen returned than left the country.

But far from the famine's having started the emigration from the present Free State, "the growth of emigration between 1815 and 1845," concludes Dr. Adams, "not only made possible the flight after the famine, it caused that flight. The thirty years before 1845 spread the emigrating spirit through all but the highest class until it became the favorite remedy for hard times. The tremendous rush of the next fifteen years could not have taken place without aid from the earlier emigrants." Since then, the land agitation, dissatisfaction with British rule, and periodic hard times have taken their toll, coupled with what Adams calls the greatest single cause of human migration, the work of powerful interests developed first in the early days of Irish emigration, "organizing and developing (immigrant) traffic for their own profit." The movement began long before

[1] New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932.

2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Galway

341 called the first type *the central-chimney house,* because the chimney will be erected over the fire-place somewhere about the middle of the roof, (fig. 1 and pl. XLI: 1, 2, 3 ; the second *the gable chimney house* because here the chimney will be close to the gable often being built as a part of the stone-built gable (fig. 2 and pl. XLI: 2). The outside chimney then not seldom forms a pronounced gabletop or gable-finial.

The Central-chimney house.

342 Some of the most primitive houses I found in Ireland belong to the central chimney house type. To illustrate I choose a house from Spiddle, Co. Galway (fig. 3 and pl. XLI: 1). The house is said to have been built before 1839 and to have withstood the "big wind" of that year. How old it actually is I had no means of discovering. The walls are of stone with the mortar put on afterwards on the inside and outside, but not used in the actual construction of the walls. Some outhouses belonging to this farm are all of dry wall construction. The roof of straw rests on couples of beams, supported on the inner edge of the walls, so that the thatch does not quite reach as far as the outside edge of the wall, but leaves a narrow space uncovered.
[171] This is an archaic feature found now in very old buildings in Ireland, as always in the black houses of Scotland.

The house is built on a slope, so that the fireplace end of the house lies higher than the entrance door. There is only one room, but a low partition wall at the back of the fire cuts off a section which is used as a bedroom.
[352] In the lower end of the house a dresser is placed so that it together with a small table cuts off another section that nowadays is also used as a bedroom. Some stools, a cradle and a churn are the other contents. There are two doors opposite of each other, both provided with half-doors. The fireplace consists of some flat stones on the floor. Over the fireplace there is a
[354] wattled chimney resting on two beams, supported by a cross beam. The chimney is adapted to a hole in the thatched roof, so there is no outside chimney. On one side of the house, the sheltered side, there are two windows.

About other houses of the same kind, I have heard from the inhabitants
[231] that in olden times the lower end of the house was used for the cattle. In late times the cattle have been removed to an outhouse and this part of the house has been adopted as a living room.

342 The division of the house into three sections, which is characteristic of the
171 central-chimney house type, is quite clear in the Scottish houses, namely the black houses, the bedroom being at the upper end of the house behind the

[Text continues top of P.211]

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Galway

342 fire, and the byre at the lower end of the house. In the Welsh long-house
171 the hearth generally seems to face the living room and bedroom part of the house, and cuts these sections from the byre part. The two doors, opposite to each other, very typical of the Irish house (see p. 217), are also found in the Welsh long-houses, but here the space between the two doors has a more pronounced feeding-walk character, than we find common in Ireland, at least to-day when the cattle are generally removed from the dwelling house. For the three sections of some South Scandinavian houses see p. 222.

The gable-chimney house.

342 In various parts of Ireland I have found numbers of primitive houses with stone-built gables. These houses are always rectangular in form, never oval. Externally the type varies greatly depending mostly on the prevailing wind. On the coast, in very windy districts, the roof will not be built very high, but in more sheltered parts, it will be more lofty.

The gable finial, the gable top often consitutes a very characteristic feature of this house-type, pl. XLII: 2. Only where the low roof is used, the gable top is not especially accentuated. The outside chimney constitutes the gable
[341] top of the chimney-gable. On the opposite gable the gable-finial may be formed in a corresponding way, as a chimneyshaft without any flue. The chimney-shafts at the gables form perhaps the single example in the Irish peasant house of intentional architecture conforming with a wide-spread custom in Western Europe. As regards the serrated gable-ends see p. 226.

342 In small dwellings of this type there is only one room, the fireplace is si-
354 tuated against one gable-wall. The most convenient place for the beds is be-
352 side the fire, and at least one bed is to be found here. This is a very original feature of this house-type which is confirmed by Scottish material, old Irish descriptions, and even drawings. In the middle-west and north of Ireland, the bed is built in a projection outwards, *cailleach,* or at least in a niche in the side wall close to the fireplace, pl. XLII: 2, as in the Scottish *tig dubh.*

342 As in the central-chimney house, there are sometimes two doors opposite each other, but even a single door is common in small old houses.

Windows have come at a later period here also. In old-fashioned houses there is generally only one window, sometimes none at all.

342 At the lower end of the house, there was in more remote times place for
231 domestic animals. The division of the room by means of the dresser may have been adopted at an early stage, the dresser being especially suitable as

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 a kind of partition. When the domestic animals were removed, often to an
231 additional building at the gablewall, this part of the house would be used as a living room, just as in the former type of house, fig. 4. In a few very pri-
342 mitive houses of this as well as of the foregoing type I have found fireplaces with no chimney at all, the smoke leaving the house through a hole in the roof above the fireplace. Sometimes I have found two smoke holes, one in each end of the roof. The doors and half doors constitute together with the smokeholes a complicated machinery, providing the current of air to regulate the turf-fire and the smoke.

Dwelling houses without chimneys were found by me in 1935 at Belmullet, Co. Mayo and in Co. Sligo.

342 The houses with thatched gables sometimes have rounded corners so that the base foundation may have an almost oval shape on the outside, while the inside room may be rectangular in form, pl. XLIII: 2. It is evident that the oval house form and the thatched gables complement each other. They could have existed together from a very early stage in building traditions. In a windy district the rounded and thatched gables are suitable, as the house will be more stream lined.

The roof with a thatched gable can easily have replaced the stone, or cyclopic roof, in cabins and huts (both, bothán). This fact and certain similarities would seem to indicate that the oval house form in the above-mentioned houses with thatched gables, may have developed from the round
● [171] or beehive house type. Parallels may be found among the stone-built huts with similar roofs in Estremadura and elsewhere.

On the other hand, houses with stone-built gables represent quite clearly the rectangular house type, as in such constructions the gables are never rounded.

342 The stone-built gable constitutes a very practical way of solving the pro-
346 blem of how to protect the gable ends of the roof of an oblong house against the wind, pl. XLIV: 3. But there is another point to be considered. In mediæval houses in villages and cities, the gables have often developed according to the use and importance of the gable wall; when the house faces the street or main road the gable wall would be far more important than the side walls. Other features point to ecclesiastical architecture. In the early churches, in Ireland and elsewhere, the gable wall constituted the front wall. In Ireland the early primitive churches were often furnished with pronounced gable finials. Furthermore it has been suggested that the introduction of the rectangular form of house is due to the first propagators of Christianity

2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 346

in Ireland, as we find in an early Irish stanza predicting this and other Christian innovations (Life of St. Patrick, translated by Colgan, p. 123).

346

It seems to me to be very likely that the above mentioned architecture of villages, towns and churches in Western Europe, giving prominence to the gable-wall, may have played an important role in the development of rectangular houses with stone-built gables in Ireland and elsewhere in Western Europe. As to Irish conditions, I would observe that the very small primitive rectangular churches, hardly bigger than an ordinary house, known from the Aran Islands and other places, have surely been built by no other builders than those who built the peasant houses. The clergy instructed them and planned the architecture. Then the people learned that the stone built gable was very useful both as protection for the ends of the thatched roof and as an arrangement for the fire, readily forming a chimney or stone-built venthole for the smoke.

171

But the early Christian churches cannot have constituted the original primitive form for every kind of rectangular house in Western Europe. As Addy (Addy: Evolution of the English House, p. 38 sq.) has mentioned, very primitive huts built in "bays" formed by "crucks" are known from the Welsh Laws as "Summer Houses". These houses consisted of a pair of "crucks" and a ridge-tree, and were completed by wattles. This form of house can be shown to be of great antiquity and can be studied over a large area. Material from Africa, the Mediterranean countries, the countries on the shores of the Atlantic, show that the square form is of greater antiquity than Christianity, so it does not follow that the rectangular house in Western Europe must necessarily owe its origin to Christian innovations, it can very well go back to a much earlier form of culture.

342 171

Regarding the higher development of the cruck-construction (or crutch) as discussed by S. O. Addy with examples from England, I would observe that the small stone-built one-storeyed Irish houses, the primitive Welsh long-house, the black houses of Scotland, as well as the small houses of Scandinavia and elsewhere have been sufficiently roofed by a very primitive small roof of pairs of beams, similar to that of the above mentioned huts, summerhouses etc. Even circular huts may have been roofed by a thatched roof, resting on a radial framework of branches without any central pole as in the Sudan circular hut, *tukl*, mentioned by A. E. Robinson, who has suggested that some prehistoric huts in Ancient Britain were of the *tukl* type (Antiquity 1930, p. 230). In Lewis (Scotland) according to Thomas (Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Vol. III, p. 130) circu-

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Galway

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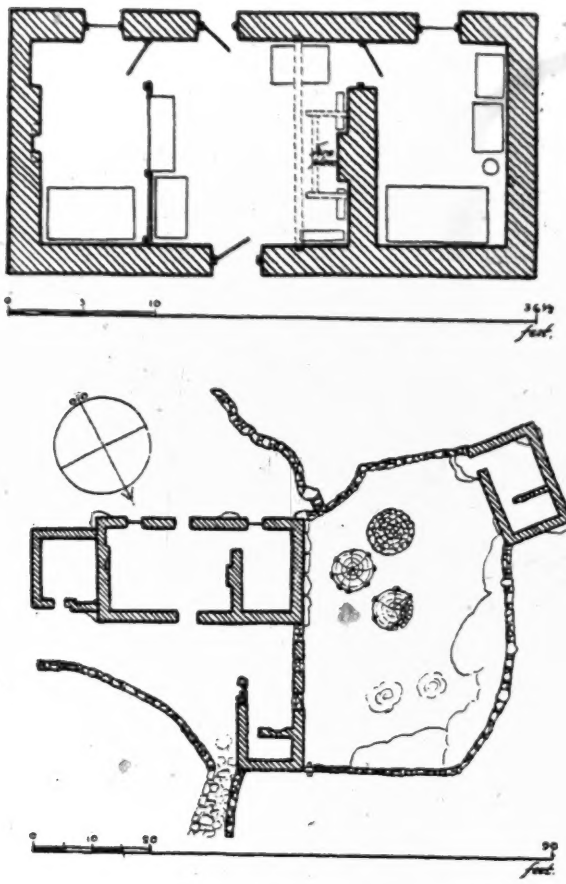

Fig. 1. Central-chimney house. Gorumna, Co. Galway.

lar stone roofed houses *bothan*, existed side by side with timber proofed oblong houses called *aridhean* (p. 138).

The highly developed roof-constructions of the English cucktype, as well as those of the Saxon and other West European houses, have been of little or no importance for the development of Spanish, Welsh[3], Scottish and Scandinavian houses in early and in later times. The cruck construction as well as the roof construction with supporting poles seems to belong to a more limited sphere of building traditions. This fact however does not exclude the possibility that these traditions could have been in some way —

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 217---ANALYST]

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 771 as a result of certain circumstances, such as social organisation, the demands and standard of the aristocracy, the clan, and the family etc. — introduced in Ireland, Scandinavia and other parts of Europe. This appears from some prehistoric materials as for example the Gall Arus near Dingle, Co. Kerry, and the so-called "kämpagravshuset" and the Viking Hall in Scandinavia.

Some of the features mentioned above in the descriptions of the central chimney-house and the gable-chimney house are common to nearly all primitive recent Irish houses.

342 354 It is especially interesting to notice the practice of providing two doorways, central and opposite, fig. 1, 3 and 4. In recent Irish houses the front door is called *doras tosaigh*, and the backdoor *doras cúl*. In Donegal however, I was told that the front door was called *doras an fhosgaidh*, door of the shelter, and the back door, *doras nagaoithe*. The opening and the closing of these two doors is determined by theprevailing wind, and its effect on the draught through the smokeholes. Thus the two doors were very often in Ireland made up of halfdoors, *leath dhoras*, constituting in co-operation with the smoke holes a machinery regulating the fire. In Ireland this is generally a turf-fire which needs special attention in its making, lighting and maintenance. The drawing off the smoke is also of importance.

342 777 Some superstitions connected with these two doors suggest that very old traditions lie behind them. There is a belief in Co. Kerry that it is very unlucky to go in one door and out the other. You must always go out of the door you entered by, otherwise you are supposed to take the luck of the house with you.

342 How the two doorways could be used with regard to the cattle I have shown by an example from Co. Kerry in my article in Béaloideas (op. cit. p. 70).

The two doorways are well-known from the Ancient Irish Laws and the old literature. The inches house and even larger houses had two doorways, a door in one and a hurdle (wattle) in the other (see Ancient Irish laws, Vol. IV, p. 305). O'Carry says that the principal house, even of kings, had but one room to which when the house was of an oblong form there were generally two doors, one opening east and one west. In the round houses on the other hand there seems to have been but one door, which faced south, west or east, and sometimes though rarely north. (O'Curry, Manners and customs of the ancient Irish. Vol. I). In Scottish beehive houses inhabited about 342 171 1850 however, there are often two opposite doors, about which Thomas says: "The two doors are a decided improvement, for the one upon the side on which the wind blows — that is, the weater door — is closed with a stone or

PLATE XLVI

1. Fastening the hay-ropes, when thatching. Glencolumbkille, Co. Donegal.
2. Scollop-thatching. Connemara, Co. Galway.

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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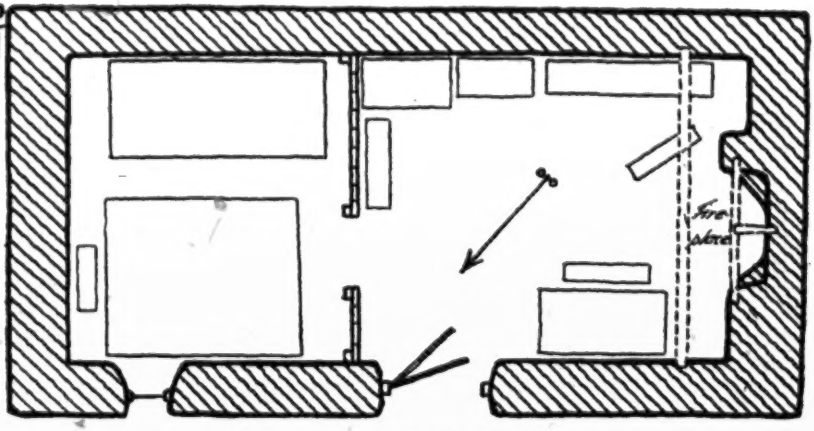


Fig. 2. Gable-chimney house. The weaver's house. Gorumna, Co. Galway.

turf, while the lee one is left open, and a gentle draught carries the smoke serenely above the heads of the inhabitants and through the Farlos (the smoke-hole in the apex of the roof)" F. L. W. Thomas, in Proceedings of the Soc. of Antiquaries of Scotland, vol. III and vol. VII.

Also in Wales the two opposite doors have been known from prehistoric times to recent days. The Welsh long-house generally has these doors (see I. C. Peate, Welsh houses, Antiquity, 1936). They have also been found in prehistoric Welsh farm buildings excavated by Cyril and Aileen Fox (see Cyril and Ailen Fox, Forts and Farms on Margam Mountain, Glamorgan, Antiquity, 1934, p. 395 sq.).

The use of two opposite doors is however widespread. In Denmark and Southern Sweden (the plainlands in Skåne) the turf-fire was common until 1900, and the inside chimney is not so very old. In the 18th century, houses without any chimney were common, the two opposite doors and even the halfdoors being used for the regulation of the fire in the same way as in Ireland (see Åke Campbell, Skånska bygder under förra hälften av 1700-talet, Uppsala 1928, p. 208 sqq.). The complete stone-built chimney was introduced earlier in the woodlands of Scandinavia, where the wood-fire was common and the fire was not regulated by any two-door system.

In Spain and Italy I have seen the two doors, and Sigurd Erixon (in Den romerska Campagnans herdehyddor och deras konstruktiva karaktär, Arkeologiska studier tillägnade H. K. H. Kronprins Gustaf Adolf, Stockholm 1932. p. 255, p. 261 and p. 124 sqq. in this number) has mentioned them when

 [TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 221 ----- ANALYST]

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 discussing the herdsmen's oval and square straw-built houses in the Roman
171 Campagna. He indicates two different systems (1) the smoke leaving through the door and (2) the smoke leaving through a hole in the roof.

In English and especially in Saxon and other West European houses, the two opposite doors sometimes are placed in the same way as in the Welsh longhouses, or in the Irish houses, but the broad plan of these extremely large buildings makes the comparisons very vague.

Besides the types now mentioned which form the basis for the development of native house types, we find in Ireland of the present day many house types which are likely of foreign origin mostly introduced by government and landlord activities.

Belonging to this group I must also reckon a feature of housebuilding which is found particularly in Leinster and Eastern Connaught but also scattered here and there in other parts of the country. This distribution more
[412] or less coincides with the distribution of the two-eared English spade, while the native type of house coincides with the single-eared Irish spade.

A partition of stone, mud or wood and lath is built on the side of the fireplace adjacent to the door, so that a person sitting at the fire cannot be seen through the open door. In the partition is a spyhole, through which one can see who is entering by the door, fig. 5.

This adjacence of fire and door with intervening partition is wellknown in England. As far as my knowledge goes I cannot look upon this as being an independent or original Irish type. Everything points to its being a late innovation. Such houses usually have a porch built at the entrance door and the arrangements of the rooms are not at all primitive.

The developed stone built house.

342 It is evident that as soon the primitive one-roomed stage is left, it will be difficult or impossible to decide whether the house represents the traditions of the central-chimney house or the traditions of the gable-chimney house.

In two ways the one-roomed stage has been left (1) by dividing up the one-roomed house by partition walls, (2) by building additions to it at the gables.

Usually it seems that the room at the lower end of the house has been made by building a thin partition wall, *síleail,* which separates it from the other part of the house, fig. 2 and 4. It is as far as I know, very unusual to build an addition to this part of the house. When new rooms are made by building additions, these are usually made to the chimney or fireplace gable.

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 This custom should be compared with the proverb which I have heard in different parts of Western Ireland: "Only a man stronger than God can [539] build back (westward) of his house" *(Is treise ná Dia an fear a chuireann siar le na theach")*. Additions made at the fireplace end of the house are always used as bedrooms. Therefore it will be very difficult to decide whether the bedroom behind the fireplace has originated as an addition to a gable-chimney house or as a partition of a central chimney house. When the wall behind the fire-place does not reach the roof the house must be regarded as a central-chimney house. Now and then it is also possible to discover in another way whether the bedroom belongs to the original house, or is built as an addition to a gable-chimney house.

In both house types the partition walls at the lower end of the house very often were made by very thin wooden partitions, *síleála*. As already mentioned, furniture especially the dresser may be used instead of a partition wall, fig. 1.

In Eastern and Southern Ireland you will find the fireplace cut off to a certain degree from the living room and forming a special kitchen corner by stone-built breasts or piers at both or at one side of the fire-place. This side wall of the fire-place can also be built of wood, fig. 6, and can go a good way into the room, so that the kitchen corner will be more like a closed room.

342 Such houses with fireplace partition apparently have their parallels in ● 171 Welsh houses. The Irish house, then, closely resembles to the living room of the Welsh long-house. This type of Irish house can be called "house with fireplace partition".

Another way of arranging accommodation in the house is to build lofts, *lochta*, and rooms on an upper floor. This upper floor will be arranged at both ends of the living room or kitchen. Then the arrangement with the house divided into three sections and with lofts at both ends is very similar to a house type in southern Sweden, the socalled Sydgötiska huset.[4] which has the kitchen or "stugan" in the centre of the house without any loft and at both ends additional chambers with lofts. Another likeness between the Irish and South Swedish houses is that there are bedplaces in the same way in the additional rooms.

[417] In the Irish house the loft can be reached by a ladder from the kitchen.

The construction of the different elements of the house.

342 Lacking nearly every architectural consciousness and at the same time every kind of imported building-material, the Irish peasant house never

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 The stone or earth-
en floor may be sprinkled for instance with coral beachsand to help in sweeping it.

[356] In some primitive houses, where the cattle still had their places, in the
[231] low end, I have found a gutter or conduit going across the low end and leading out through the door.

333 *The walls.* There are two main types of wall construction representing very
342 old building traditions.

[172] 1. The dry stone walls, *fallaí fuara* — met with in the prehistoric buildings, *clochánsˇ* etc. — are built of stones (often flattish) without mortar. Dwelling-houses which have been built with dry stone walls have in later times been covered both inside and outside with mortar, pl. XLIII: 1. The space between the bigger stones are often carefully filled up by small stones, *spallaí.*

Especially in Co. Clare I have admired the precision developed in the construction of the walls.

[172] 2. Of prehistoric origin are also the mud, clod or clay walls, *falla feidín.* A fantastic explanation of the term makes it equal to *falla ar feadh dín,* a wall that endures as long as the roof is kept properly thatched (Dinneen).

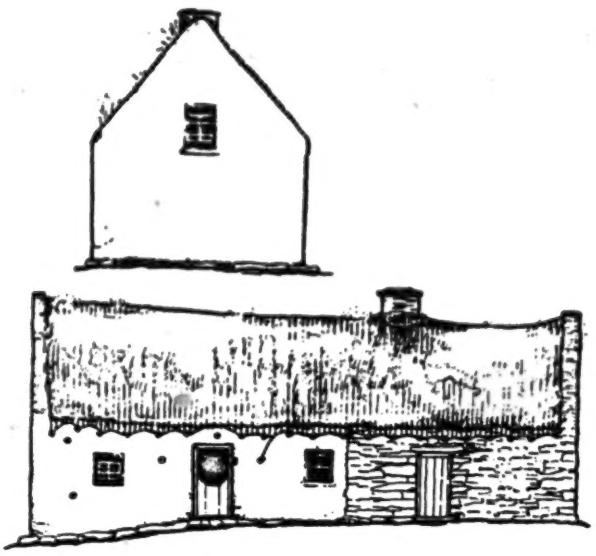
The clay was pulverized and made into a thick mortar by wetting it and mixing it with cut rushes or course sprat hay. The well built mud-wall houses form comfortable dwellings and it has happened that people have regretted leaving excellent thatched "mud walls" to live in cold stone-walled slatted dwellings.

342 The foundation of the walls is sometimes a pronunced feature of the house. Whilst the walls usually have a width of 1½, 2 or 3 feet, the foundation is wider, forming a shelf or broad step along the building serving as a pathway to the door. The foundation is sometimes not very dissimilar to some prehistoric house-foundations. In this connection I would like to remark that the pathway and nearest surroundings of the entrance door are sometimes
[171] paved by a mosaic of small cobble-stones from the sea-shore. This I have seen in costal districts in South West, and I suggest that it is the same kind of pavement as appears in Portugal, Madeira, Marocco and elsewhere at the border of the Atlantic And the Mediterranean Sea.

Doors and windows. In many primitive houses of to-day the construction of the door-opening is extremely archaic: flat stones serving as lintel and as threshold. The frame of the door is wooden.

The doors usually have bolts of wood and a hasp to close the door. A thick wooden beam can be placed across inside the door on stormy nights, certain holes in the wall at both sides of the door being made for this beam,

2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Kerry



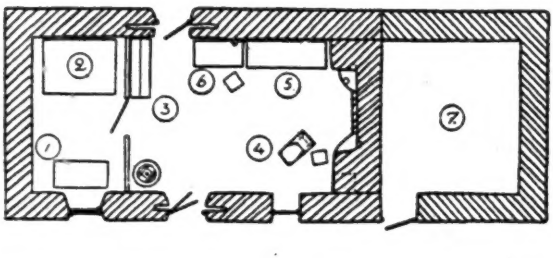


Fig. 4. Gable-chimney house. Cillrialaig, Co. Kerry. The cattle otice in the lower end of the house. Now removed to a house added to the upper gable wall. 1 table, 2 bed, 3 dresser, 4 cradle, 5 bench, 6 table, 7 sowhouse.

[231]

fig. 4. In Co. Kerry, Co. Galway and other parts of Ireland, I have been told [171] of rough strong doors of wattles bound together with ropes of *sugáin*. Such a door, the hurdle door, *sgálán fraoigh* or *scalpán*, was more commonly used as a door for cattle sheds. It is found also in Scotland (see e. g. an illustration showing sheilings in Jura (S. W. Scotland) in Pinkertons Voyages and Travels, vol. III, p. 278, London 1809) and it is mentioned in the Ancient Irish laws. About the two opposite doors and the half-doors see p. 217.

In older times a hole in the wall, a looplight, served as window. It was closed [284, at night with a hay-wisp or a wooden shutter, *cómhla*, which was removed 414] by day and secured at night by a stick placed across or by a latch.

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 Windows, as well as chimneys, were taxed, hence the oldfashioned blind
[65] wall and the old fireplace (without chimney) being preserved. The daylight was admitted to the kitchen by the door opening. A pad of straw was placed
[294] at the door, *sop i mbéal dorais* (Dinneen) on which tailors and other craftsmen used to sit to avoid window-tax. When windows came later on, they were placed on the side of the house sheltered from the prevailing wind.

The gables. The stone built gables are higher or lower according to the form of the roof, which is determined by the wind. In some districts of Ireland
[184] especially in the Aran Islands, Connemara, Sligo, Mayo there are often even in very primitive buildings, step gables or serrated gables. In other parts of Ireland the gables are straight up to the top. In Southern and Eastern Ireland the gables are generally of this type. Half thatched or hipped gables are sometimes found in the east, where now and then the thatch is also bent over the gable edge in the same way as in Wales. This is common on mud houses.

How the gables protect the ends of the thatched roof and support the horizontal ribs is shown in pl. XLIV: 2.

The roof. Roof and wall constructions meet one another in the most primitive stages, when the house is only a roof over a foundation wall, of a cavity, or when the roof is constructed similarly to the *clochán*s with the upper course of stones slightly overlapping the lower course. This construction is not known among dwelling houses of to-day, but can be found in outhouses, sweating buths etc.

Roofs made by wide slates or stone flags will be seen in some parts of Ireland when there is a natural access to stones suitable for slates as in Co. Clare where such roofs are found on outhouses with the narrow stone wails carrying the flags.

The Irish house from olden times generally has had not a stone roof, but a thatched roof, *ceann tuighe*. The art of making good thatched roofs is now dying out but in earlier times Irishmen had developed great skill in roofing with thatch.

The thatched roof is supported internally by beams joined in pairs forming
[804] the couples, *cúplaí*. The couples are placed at a certain distance and the space enclosed between two couples must be looked upon as a sort of architectural unit. The length of the house can be measured by the number of couples.
[17] A very similar kind of measuring is well known in Denmark and Skåne. In many old houses the length of the house seems to indicate traditions from the ancient Irish laws (See Addy, p. 84).

The roof-supporting system of beams varies very little. The beams can

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

or breast, the seats, and the chimney are built of stone, and joined together, the common modern type of Irish fireplace emerges. It can however take on a slightly different form in different parts of Ireland, for instance in Donegal one finds a carved breast and in Southern Ireland it stands straight up at right angles to the floor.

Only the hearth itself has still another stage to pass through in some parts of Ireland. The hearth will be built so that the fire rests in a grate, in late times much elevated and supplied with iron bars. Below is a place for the ashes. This iron grate owes its origin to the fact that in different parts of Ireland, other fuel such as coal was substituted for turf, pl. XLVIII: 1.

To the coal fireplace often belongs the bellows which can be made in different ways such as the hand bellows and the whealbellows. These iron grates and bellows can be found in such forms in Welsh and English houses.

The hearth from the earliest times forms the centre of family activity in Ireland. Here is the rallying point of the people. The fireplace has attracted to itself the seating places of the house, and in earlier times even the sleeping places. The place of honour is the corner seat near the fire, where the guests are invited to sit down. The stone-built seats or the small wooden stools placed at the side of the fire in primitive Irish dwellings are probably the predecessors of the comfortable armchairs found at every West European fireplace, in palace or cottage, where the same tradition of social activity is attached to the fire seats. From the many folk-beliefs connected with the fire and the fireplace, I only notice that in the South of Ireland, on All Hallow Eve, the fire is not allowed to go out and food is placed on the floor for the dead people who are expected to visit the house. This custom seems to indicate that in ancient times the places for eating were in front of the fireplace. In Scandinavia the food for the dead people is placed on the table.

The Cailleach.

From the northern coast of Donegal to Galway bay, but not south of it, I have found the projection outwards with the bed, *cailleach*. The outshot with the *cailleach* is ordinarily put at one side of the fireplace. In a district between Tuam, Co. Galway, and Tubercurry, Co. Sligo, I have found a richly developed *cailleach* tradition. In many townlands nearly every house is fitted with a *cailleach*, and it is not un-common to find a *cailleach* beside the fireplace in the kitchen, continued by a *cailleach* put to the bedroom behind the fireplace. This *cailleach* connects the houses of central and northern Ireland with the primitive houses of Scotland, *both* and *tigh dubh*, where the in-

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

352
171 built bed in the hall beside the fireplace has been common. But this custom of bed is also known over a wider area along the North Sea. As to the outshot it is to be remarked that it must be compared with the outshots of English and Northwest European houses. Where the outshot tradition is natural to the house-types, the outshots are used for purposes and not only for beds.

In Donegal I have found *cailleachs* closed with wooden doors, similar to the built in beds of North-West Europe. The *cailleach* is cut off by curtains.

It has been mentioned that the dresser at an early stage of development has formed part of the partition. This and other facts (the dresser has generally a fixed traditional place, different in different parts of Ireland) seems to indicate that the dresser belongs — as in Scandinavia and West-European countries — to a rather old set of furniture.

The table however seems not to have any prominent place in the old-fashioned houses at least in Western and Northern Ireland. It is always put along a wall in primitive houses, and one can never sit round it. It never attracted the social activities of the house, and there are no ceremonies connected with the places at the table, as in countries where the table is the predominating social and family-centre. In this respect the table in Ireland has never supplanted the fireplace. There are no references, as far as I am told in the early tales to people feasting at the table. I think that the table [184] does not belong to the original set of furniture. In many fishermen's dwellings in North-West of Donegal it is still missing. The people sit in front [264] of the fireplace round the shallow-basket, *ciseog*, when eating, the basket resting upon the knees of the familymembers. This basket will be seen after dinner-time hanging to dry on the south wall of the house, pl. XLVIII: 2. I suppose this is the native and original "table", at least in certain cultural spheres of Western and Northern Ireland.

[113] [1] In a valuable article by Ludwig Mühlhausen, Contributions to the study of the concrete material culture of the Gaoltacht, Cork Arch. Soc. Vls. XXXVIII, p. 67, and XXXIX, p. 41, et sqq., is found a very good description of houses in Dingle Peninsula and Cornamona, Co. Galway. I have not come across any more detailed contribution to the study of the Irish house. From books of travel and novels some information can be picked up. See Béaloideas 1935. p. 57 sqq.

[114] [2] The material here presented has been collected by me during journeys in Ireland in the years 1934 and 1935. For the many facilities afforded me in pursuing my investigations in Ireland I must express my thanks to the Irish Folklore Commission and its Director Mr Séamus O'Duilearga, on whose behalf I undertook these studies. I am also grateful to my Irish friends both scholars and country people who kindly lent me their assistance. Here I can only mention Mr Seán O'Suilleabháin, B. A., and Miss Aine Ní Chróinín, M. A., especially for having supplied the Gaelic terms used by me.

[3] As to the Welsh long-houses the cruck construction seems to be an exception (see Peate p. 452).

[4] Cfr. Sigurd Erixon: Skansens Kulturgeschichtliche Abteilung, Führer. Stockholm 1928, p. 92.

[5] *Pinniuir*, f., a gable, a gable-end; fig. a patron, chief, etc. *pinniuir an tighe*, the house-gable, fig. the "head" of the house. Fr. pignon, Eng. pynum. Dinneen, An Irish-English Dictionary.

3: Campbell B. E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

NOTES ON THE IRISH HOUSE. II.

BY ÅKE CAMPBELL, UPPSALA

341 In the Ireland of today there exist not only buildings of a more developed stage of construction, *i. e.* stone-built or mud houses with roofs resting on wooden couples' but also buildings of very archaic or of extremely simplified or primitive construction. The stone beehive huts, roofed by a [172] system of overlapping stones and some oval or oblong houses are identical with or closely linked with prehistoric house-types. The huts of wickerwork, sod and turf, on the other hand, represent very simple house-types, of which not all can with certainty be characterized as archaic, but rather as imitations in a simplified form of advanced house-types, or as simple temporary structures, or solutions of individual building problems often due to poverty or lack of better building material.

These groups of buildings offer possibilities of very wide, but at the same time very vague, comparisons throughout the fields of archæological, historic literary and ethnological facts.

341 171 Ireland's cultural position is of great interest, whether Ireland be looked upon as a relic-zone where many culture-elements still persist after they have become extinct in Continental Europe, or whether it be supposed to constitute a critical point in the Atlantic intercepting the different streams of culture flowing from North, South, and East.[1]

There are features common to Irish and Scandinavian archaic or primitive buildings, to Irish and Spanish-Portuguese buildings or to Irish and English buildings, but it would be premature to come to any decision about the origin of these features until the whole area of their distribution has been surveyed. Adapting T. J. Westropp's words about the ancient Irish "Forts" I would say: The key to the origin of the Irish house-types lies as much in a comparison with cognate buildings over the rest of Europe as in the native Irish records.

As it is not possible to arrive at any definite conclusions until investigations have been made on a broader basis, I must content myself here with pointing out some types of buildings and some problems which seem to me to be of certain importance.

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

The clochán type with domed roof.

172 342 The clochán, or stone bee-hive hut, no doubt represents a very old stage of house-tradition (pl. 29,a—32), although it can be studied from material still existing and, in some cases, still in use in Ireland today (pl. 33, a, b). As it represents a prehistoric type of building, investigations of the Irish clochán and other types of bee-hive, oval or oblong houses from the Iron Age and later times become of immediate interest for the study of recent Irish house-traditions.

A comparison between the common Irish (developed) houses of today and the clochán (prehistoric or of later date) may give the impression that there is a gap between them that cannot be bridged. Nevertheless the clochán-type constitutes a very suitable starting point for discussion of the recent Irish peasant houses and their history. There are indeed some significant parallels from various countries and different periods, which help to illuminate the problem here in question. In particular I would like to draw [171] attention to the Scottish bee-hive house but also to the black house *(bothán, aridhean, tigh dubh)*, to the remains of circular and roughly oblong huts of stone in other parts of the Brittish Isles, *e. g.* in Carnarvon, Wales, and to the very similar settlements in Spain and Portugal,[3] and in Italy and Greece. In Scandinavia, such settlements and forts as have been excavated in Denmark, Norway and the Swedish provinces of Öland and Gotland must be considered as parallels to the West European material here mentioned.

Descriptions of Irish clochán can be found in several archæological works. I quote here some descriptions given by Macalister:[4]

"A clochán was built in this manner. A space of the size and shape intended was marked out on the ground with loose stones. Usually the plan was circular or oval, but sometimes the building is circular outside and square within. Above these stones another course was laid, slightly oversailing the course below. A third course overhung the second, and so on; the walls being made thick enough, as they rose, to secure stability. At last the sides of the building approximated together so that the hole in the top of the chamber could be closed with a single flag-stone or with two or more such stones. No mortar of any kind was needed or used, though the outer surface may have been covered with sods or some protection to keep out the rain. As a rule the stones of which the building was composed were laid not quite horizontal, but were sloped outward, so as to shed off rain-water to the outside of the building."

The most famous remains of clochán are perhaps the six bee-hive cells at

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP of P 177---Analyst]

174

PLATE 29.

a. Clochán (beehive hut). Fahan, Dingle, Co. Kerry. Note to the left in back-ground a very large clochán which has collapsed. The remains of several other collapsed clochán are inside same *caiseal*, (circular wall enclosing a group of buildings, huts, etc.).
b. Clochán inside a cashel. Fahan, Dingle, Co. Kerry.

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Kerry

172 342 Skellig Michael, Co. Kerry, and the so called "City of Fahan", which probably includes the largest number of buildings of this kind (pl. 29, 30,b).[5] But no investigation has been made — as far as I know — of round stone huts in Ireland built and inhabited in later times. Such investigation has, however, been made on the Scottish Islands by F. L. W. Thomas.[6] It is evident that the bee-hive huts (*both*) of Lewis described by Thomas, are very close to or identical with the Irish clochàns, and represent the same building traditions. This also agrees with the accounts of Irish cabins in the literature.[7] I will confine myself here to two descriptions made by Thomas and published in 1860 and in 1869, both dealing with stone bee-hive huts built in late times and used as dwellings. As these descriptions are inaccessible to most readers I must quote them at some length.

342 171 The normal and, Thomas presumes, most modern form of bee-hive house (in the middle of the 19th century) is "an irregular circle, six or seven feet in diameter, the walls rising perpendicularly for three feet; each successive course of stone then overlaps or projects beyond the one below, and then the roof gradually closes in and takes a beehive form. — — — A hole, called the *Farlos (farleus*, a skylight), is left in the apex of the roof for the escape of the smoke, and is closed with a turf or flat stone as requisite. (See pl. 34,c). There are two doors, 2½ feet high and 2 feet broad, and they are placed so that a line joining them cuts off on one side about two thirds of the enclosed area. The two doors are a decided improvement, for that one upon the side on which the wind blows — that is, the weather door — is closed with a stone or turf, while the lee one is left open, and a gentle draught carries the smoke serenely above the head of the inhabitants and through the Farlos. From door to door a row of flat stones, a few inches in height, forms the bench or seat, *being*, and behind this the area is filled up with hay or rushes for a bed. I had a native estimate of its capacity, and found it calculated to hold three people. In front of the bench, and midway between the two doors, is the fire — of peat of course, and not much needed except for cooking. Above the fire, a longish stone draws in and out of the wall for the purpose of hanging a pot on, and in nearly every ruin did we find this primitive instrument in its place, shoved back into the wall."[8]

With the investigations made by Thomas in 1857 and later, the *clochán* as an inhabited living dwelling is brought within the horizon of the study of today. In the following example which is taken from Thomas' description, this house-type of a prehistoric time is allied with a late innovation, namely the stone-built chimney, which in the course of the 19th century seems to

PLATE 30.

a. Clochán na Carraighe. Inishmore, Aran Islands, Co. Galway.

b. Clochán. Fahan, Co. Kerry.

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342
191

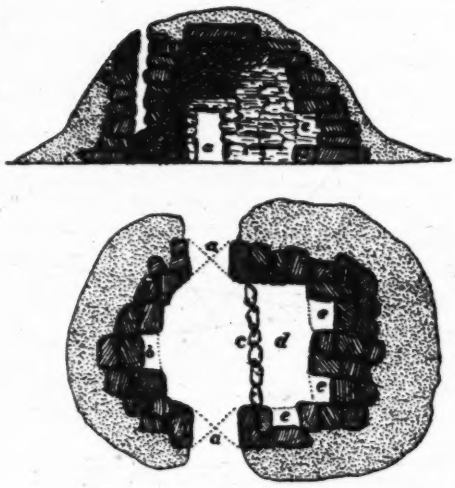


Fig. 1. A both or clochán on Cnoc Dubh, at Ceann Thulabhig, Uig, Lewis. From Thomas. A, a, doors; b, fire-place; c, a row of stones in front of the bed place; d, the bed; e, e, e, small recesses in the wall to serve for cupboards.

become more and more common even in the dwellings of this remote district, thus heralding the total replacement of the black-houses by the white-houses with stone-built chimneys at the gable walls. With regard to the arrangement for the fire, this clochán stands on the same level of development as the many houses or huts of this and later times, the roof of which has been broken through by the stone-built chimney.

The *bo'h (both)* or *clochán* on Cnoc Dubh, at Ceann Thulabhig, Uig, Lewis, fig. 1, is the most modern that Thomas has seen — "and at the same time the last, in all probability, that will be constructed in this manner." It is of bee-hive form, about 18 feet in diameter, 9 feet high, and roofed by the horizontal or cyclopean arch, *i. e.* by a system of overlapping stones. The outside is covered with green turf. There are two doors (fig. 1 a,a) opposite to each other, higher (3 feet) and better formed than is usual. Within, the chamber is dome-shaped and is between 7 and 8 feet square on the floor. A row of stones (c), half a foot in height, cuts off one half of the floor for a bed (d). There are several small recesses (e, e, e) in the wall to serve for cupboards. But what distinguishes this *bo'h* from all others is the presence of a chimney over the fireplace (b). Thomas concludes, from what he heard from the woman who was living in it in 1867, and from va-

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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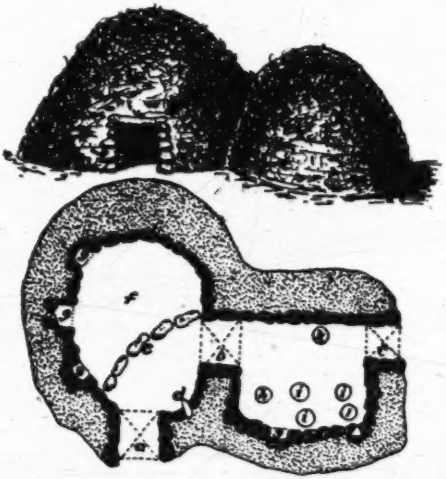

Fig. 2. A double both, the garry or summer pasturage of the tenants of Corlista. Uig, Lewis. From Thomas. A, b, c, doorways; d, fire-place; e, row of stones in front of the bed-place; f, the bed; g, g, niches; h, cream tub; i, i, i, three milk or cheese tubs, covered by slaty stones; j, a churn; k, a stoup for carrying water.

rious circumstances, that this *bo'h* was made about ninety years ago (from 1867).

With regard to Thomas's own comparisons, I will only add here that he has made a rather daring comparison between the *both* of Lewis and the Eskimo domed-shaped hut of Greenland. But perhaps a comparison of the grouping of the houses would be more effective than a comparison of the house construction of each type.[14] The Greenland hypothesis, however, seems to me to be worth studying. But at the same time we must not lose sight of stone-built huts and huts of straw, sods, mud and wickerwork, round or oval in form, used especially by cattle-breeding peoples in the Iberian Peninsula (*e. g.* in Estremadura, Andalusia, Granada), Italy and elsewhere.

Bee-hive houses of the *clochán* type in Ireland of today are to be found in some parts of the Gaeltacht (the Gaelic-speaking districts of Ireland), as on the coast and islands from Kerry to Mayo. There the stone-built bee-hive houses are used — not as dwellings, so far as I know — but as milk-houses or for storing turf etc. In the Dingle peninsula, Co. Kerry, bee-hive houses are still being built as outhouses. There are also modernised clochán with wooden doors — they can even have a glass ball to decorate the top.

343

The only stone-built and stone-roofed houses equipped with a fireplace and

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

343 a smokehole which I have found, was an ancient sweating bath, *teach allais*, in Co. Mayo. This building is square in form.

171 Thomas's material is however interesting from a certain point of view. From prehistoric times are found agglomerations of round, oblong and square houses in Ireland (*e. g.* Skellig-Michael), in Wales[9] and in other parts of the 341 British Isles. The same mixture of round and square or oblong buildings can be observed in Portugal,[10] Spain and elsewhere in Western and Southern Europe.

From Thomas's material we now learn what an *inhabited* settlement of this kind looks like. In Lewis, for example, the stone-roofed circular houses, *bothan*, have been erected in the same *gearraidhean, i. e.* place for booleying, as the timber-roofed huts, *aridhean*.[12] We are forced to infer that round, oval, oblong, square buildings must be studied with regard to each other and with regard to different constructions in timber, branches, sods, stone etc.

The *oblong form* of building can obviously have developed or been invented in a number of ways, as there are varying antecedent conditions in different cases.[13] There is however *one* oval or oblong form of building which may have its origin in the stone-built domed-roofed bee-hive house.

The construction with a domed roof does not permit of much widening of the space between the walls. Even if very long and suitable flag-stones are at hand, the limits for the cyclopean arch will make it impossible for the primitive builder to enlarge the circumference of his house to any great degree. To get more room he must put two or more circular bee-hive buildings together, or he must go over to the oval or oblong form. Thomas himself touches upon the problem in these words: "It is evident that in this style of architecture (domed roofed buildings) the size of the rooms is limited by the nature of the stone; and although a tolerably safe roof may be made in this manner with rough moor-stones to cover an area of six feet it would have a most uncomfortable and suspicious appearance if extended over twice those dimensions (six or seven feet in diameter). Even in the Orkneys where is abundance of flag stone, although there are chambers there forty-five feet long the breadth was only five feet."

342 To elucidate this important problem the Irish oval *clochán* offers us the most valuable material. I refer to the series of photographs, kindly placed at my disposal by the distinguished author of The Islands of Ireland, Thomas Mason.[14] This *clochán* (Clochán na Carraighe, Inishmore Island, Aran, Co. Galway, pl. 30 a, 31, and 32) is of oval shape, the entrance door being at the long sidewall. The roof is made of overlapping stones, one row of large slabs covering the space between the two long sides of the roof, which are

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342
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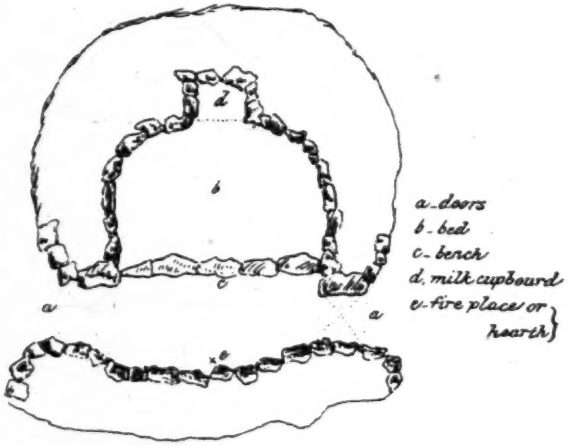

Fig. 3. Both, on West side of Loch an ath Ruadh. Uig, Lewis. From Thomas.

joined together in this manner (pl. 32, an interior showing roof formation. Camera was placed on the ground pointing upwards).

Primitive dwellings and hypogea of the Scottish isles also show the same arrangements. Thus it seems to be evident that the study of the oblong houses there (black-houses, *tigh dubh)* cannot be separated from the study of the *clochán* type. In consequence, it also will be necessary to compare the so-called Norse building customs in the Scottish Isles, which have been put forward by Aage Roussell,[12] not only with Thomas's black-house material — as Roussell does — but also with Thomas's other material including the stone-roofed houses.

[12]

Stone built timber-roofed oval houses.

If my working hypothesis holds, a thorough study of the oval houses will throw much light on Irish building traditions. At least in some parts of Ireland the oval houses formed the basis for the development of native houses of today, *e. g.* the one-roomed central-chimney houses with thatched gables.

It is evident that oval house-types can easily have been reached in places where the round or oval clochán as well as the hut with thatched roof resting on timber are known. When suitable large slabs were scarce, the primi-

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Galway

342 inner edge of the walls. As the oval house form does not permit any stone-built gables the roof has rounded and thatched gables.

The house as it now stands as a still inhabited homestead constitutes a good example of the stone-built, timber-roofed, oval house, wellknown from the early part of the 19th century. This house can, no doubt, be classified as a link or a cross between the prehistoric oval clochán and the primitive central-chimney house of later times. Thus, if my theory holds, there is no gap, from the point of view of classification, in the Irish house-tradition, as far as the central-chimney house is concerned.

Huts of wicker-work; sods, turf.

Although the material here concerned may often seem to be of a very indefinite character, from which only a few certain conclusions can be drawn (see p. 173), it is nevertheless necessary to study thoroughly every kind of primitive hut. The many references to Irish building-culture given in the old literature, indicate the very interesting fact that it was the wickerwork huts and other houses built of various materials, and not the stone-built *clochàns* that may have been very common as small dwellings in olden times.

342 During my rather short visits to Ireland, I have not come across
171 any huts of such a kind as wicker-houses, oak-houses, *tech darach* etc., as are described by Eugene O'Curry[15] and by him compared with the Gaulish wicker-houses shown on the Column of Antonius. But inquiries along this line may show that such houses did exist in Ireland not so long ago. Certainly I have got some reports about booleying practised *e. g.* in Donegal up to ninety years ago. The people took their cattle to the mountains in the summer and there they erected huts, *bothogai*, for themselves. But how were these huts constructed? It is probable that they, at least somewhere in Ireland, have been made in a fashion similar to the creel houses in the Scottish Highlands of the same period. I will give some references from Scottish authors, mentioned by Thomas.[16]

According to Walker's Economical History of the Hebrides,[17] the farmers in most Highlands had their homesteads on the arable land, where they dwelt in what are called the winter houses. Soon after the middle of June, when the arable land was sown, they moved with their cattle to a mountainous place belonging to the farm. There they quickly erected or repaired their summer houses which were composed chiefly of sods and branches of trees. "Where wood is at hand, they erect what are called creel houses.

PLATE 34.

a. Houses in Achill, Co. Galway. From Ireland, its Scenery, Character etc., by Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall.

b. Oval house. Inveran, Co. Galway.

c. Beehive houses. Uig, Lewis, Hebrides. Inhabited 1859. After F. W. L. Thomas.

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 171 These are formed of wooden posts, interlaced with branches of trees, like wicker-work, and covered on the outside with turf."

Robertson[19] describes a type of tenant's house, the construction of which must be like the wicker-work houses above-mentioned. "When such a house is to be built, the first thing done is to construct a coarse frame of wood, corresponding to the dimensions of the house, in length and breadth; then upon this frame to fix standards inclining inward, at proper distances, which rise to the height of the intended wall, and are kept in a firm position by being morticed in a tree above of the same dimensions with the tree below. These standards are closely woven with wicker work, to keep the sods from falling in; which, being built on the outside, finish the side walls of a creel-house."

342 221 As the Irish booleying custom, *buaile*, doubtless preserved many primitive and archaic building traditions, it should form an important subject of study also with regard to wicker-work huts. However, the summer huts which are mentioned in the Welsh laws are not referred to in the Irish lawtracts. Professor Mac Néill has kindly informed me that this does not mean that the *buaile* custom did not exist in ancient Ireland. "It was probably practised by the less opulent class who had a limited supply of pasture land. The laws have little to say about these, as in general they were under the jurisdiction of a noble."

342 343 The huts erected in later times of sods or turf and used as shelters for donkeys, pigs, etc., which can be met with in various parts of Ireland, would also well repay study. In the literature of the 19th and the early 20th centuries can be found travellers' accounts of such houses, although they seldom go into details about the construction. I refer, *e. g.*, to a description of Caesar Otway's from his "Sketches in Erris and Tyrawly", an account of his travels in Northwestern Ireland in 1840:

"The dwellers here were bog troglodytes — the foundations of their dwellings are sunk eight feet or more below the surface of the surrounding black bog, the walls are constructed of wet sods, cut off from the surface of that bog: there is no door or door-case, no chimney; the orifices by which the people enter, and through which the smoke *should* issue, are filled up as suits the wind, with bundles of heath or turf-kreels, filled with potato-stalks; a drain comes out from under the floor of the dwelling, from which the superabundant moisture escapes, or else it would be a common boghole: but, by its means, the water that springs abundantly from the sides and bottom, flows away, and the people sitting or standing within, are free from actual overflow."

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

[16] Op. cit., vol. VII, p. 177 sq.
[17] Vol. I, p. 5.
[18] Agricultural Survey of Inverness, Vol. I, p. 318.
[19] Fra de Færöske Bygder, Copenhagen 1929, p. 196 sqq.
[20] Öland under äldre Järnåldern, Stockholm 1933.
[21] Gotländska gårdar och byar under äldre järnåldern, Stockholm 1933, p. 179.
[22] Macalister, op. cit. p. 94.
[23] Dinneen, An Irish-English Dictionary, Dublin 1937.
[24] Manners and customs of the ancient Irish, London 1873.
[25] See Sigurd Erixon, Skansens Kulturhistoriska avdelning, Stockholm 1925, p. 87.
[26] Ancient Irish Houses, ed O'Donovan, Dublin 1865—1901, Vol. V, p. 496, Vol. VI, p. 497, foot note
[27] Ancient Irish Laws, Vol. IV, p. 305.
[27a] From a paper by Eóin Mac Néill on Ancient Irish Law: Law of Status or Franchise, Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Vol. XXXVI, Sect. C, p. 287 sq.
[28] Some prehistoric houses in the Rhineland and elsewhere in Central Europe, have been compared with the Irish upper class houses and described as survivals from the Celtic wave spreading westward over the Continent. See Collingwood, The Archæology of Roman Britain, p. 129—134. Even the Romano-British barn dwelling has been discussed in this connection, see J. A. Richmond, The Analogies of the Romano-British Barn Dwelling, in the Journal of Roman Studies, Vol. XXII, London 1932. p. 66, and the Frisian and Saxon houses of today.

Photographs: Author: pl. 34, a—b; 35, a—c; 36, a—b. Mr. Thomas Mason: pl. 29, a—b; 30, a—b; 31; 32; 33, b.

Out of the following books are illustrations taken: F. W. L. Thomas: Notice of Beehive houses in Harris and Lewis, in Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, vol. III and VII: pl. 34, a. Mr and Mrs. S. C. Hall: Ireland, its Scenery, Character etc., vol. III, London 1843, 34, a.

4:Hooton D-4,5 (1934-1936) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

the basis of geography, partly upon his knowledge of the regional anthropological differences. Convenience also dictated the use of county boundaries in the majority of instances.

AGE

The average age of 8809 Irish males is 34.55 ± 0.10 years. In the anthropometric survey of a population it seems desirable to include the males of subadult age (18-20 years) as an offset to those who are presumably senile (60 years and upward). The incomplete growth of the subadults tends to counterbalance the diminished height of the aged. The standard deviation of age for the entire series is 13.95 ± 0.07 years. The county subgroup means of ages range from 29.45 ± 0.29 (Longford, Westmeath) to 38.80 ± 0.51 (Waterford and Wexford).

STATURE

Stature was measured by the standard technique with the Martin anthropometer. Subjects, of course, were required to remove their shoes.

Table 1 presents the data on stature and figure 1 plots the means of stature by local subgroups in intervals of 1 cm. The mean of stature for the whole of Ireland is 172.02 cm., which, of course, is tall. The actual range of subgroup means is only 4 cm.—from 170.52 cm. (Meath, Louth, County Dublin) to 174.54 cm. (Aran Islands). The variabilities of the nineteen subgroups are for the most part neither significantly higher nor lower than that of the total series. The standard deviation of stature for the total series (6.81 ± 0.03 cm.) is not very high when the age range of the population is taken into consideration. It is somewhat higher than that of any of the eight European ethnic series recorded by Davenport and Love as a result of measurements taken upon troops during demobilization after the World War ('21, p. 113). Standard deviations in these series ranged from 6.06 cm. (Italians) to 6.62 cm. (English). The mean height of 6164 Irish was 171.36 cm. and the standard deviation of stature 6.31 cm. Thus our

4:Hooton D-4,5 (1934-1936) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

sample from all of Ireland is taller and somewhat more variable in stature than the United States army sample. It should be recalled, however, that most of the soldiers were between the ages of 18 and 31 years and that certain stature standards were enforced for the acceptance of recruits. Consequently, the variability of the army sample has probably been reduced

TABLE 1

Stature by county subgroups

	NO.	RANGE	MEAN	S. D.	V.
West Donegal	212	146–193	171.90 ± 0.33	7.17 ± 0.23	4.17 ± 0.14
Mayo	594	143–196	172.17 ± 0.20	7.20 ± 0.14	4.18 ± 0.08
Sligo, Leitrim, South Fermanagh, West Cavan	725	146–202	172.05 ± 0.17	6.72 ± 0.12	3.91 ± 0.07
West Galway (Connemara)	451	155–196	173.13 ± 0.20	6.36 ± 0.14	3.67 ± 0.08
Aran Islands	136	158–193	174.54 ± 0.41	7.14 ± 0.29	4.09 ± 0.17
Clare	944	146–196	172.14 ± 0.14	6.57 ± 0.10	3.82 ± 0.06
Kerry	519	152–199	173.16 ± 0.20	6.90 ± 0.14	3.98 ± 0.08
Cork	565	152–193	172.71 ± 0.19	6.69 ± 0.13	3.87 ± 0.08
Limerick	339	152–193	171.75 ± 0.25	6.75 ± 0.17	3.93 ± 0.10
East Galway, Roscommon	479	149–196	173.28 ± 0.22	7.11 ± 0.15	4.10 ± 0.09
Longford, Westmeath	717	149–187	171.27 ± 0.16	6.30 ± 0.11	3.68 ± 0.07
Offaly, Leix, Kildare	513	152–193	171.57 ± 0.20	6.75 ± 0.14	3.93 ± 0.08
Tipperary, Kilkenny	623	149–196	171.99 ± 0.19	6.87 ± 0.13	3.99 ± 0.08
Waterford, Wexford	425	149–190	171.24 ± 0.23	6.99 ± 0.16	4.08 ± 0.09
Wicklow, Carlow	273	149–202	170.88 ± 0.28	6.96 ± 0.20	4.14 ± 0.12
Meath, Louth, Co. Dublin	427	155–193	170.52 ± 0.21	6.45 ± 0.15	3.78 ± 0.09
East Cavan, Monaghan, Armagh	388	155–190	170.91 ± 0.23	6.63 ± 0.16	3.88 ± 0.09
Antrim, Down	167	149–187	171.39 ± 0.38	7.29 ± 0.27	4.25 ± 0.16
North Fermanagh, East Donegal, Tyrone Londonderry	310	152–190	171.96 ± 0.25	6.57 ± 0.18	3.82 ± 0.10
Total	8807	143–202	172.02 ± 0.05	6.81 ± 0.03	3.96 ± 0.02

by these factors. In a study of native born White criminals of native parentage in the United States the mean of stature was 171.90 cm. and the standard deviation 6.45 ± 0.05 cm. (Hooton, '39, Table V-14). The age range of the American criminals is more closely comparable with that of the Irish population, but, again, the criminals average somewhat younger (30.70 ± 0.12 years) and have a lower age variability

4:Hooton D-4,5 (1934-1936) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

(standard deviation 11.40 ± 0.08 years). However, crime is principally a phenomenon of youth and the age variability certainly and the stature variability possibly are affected and reduced thereby.

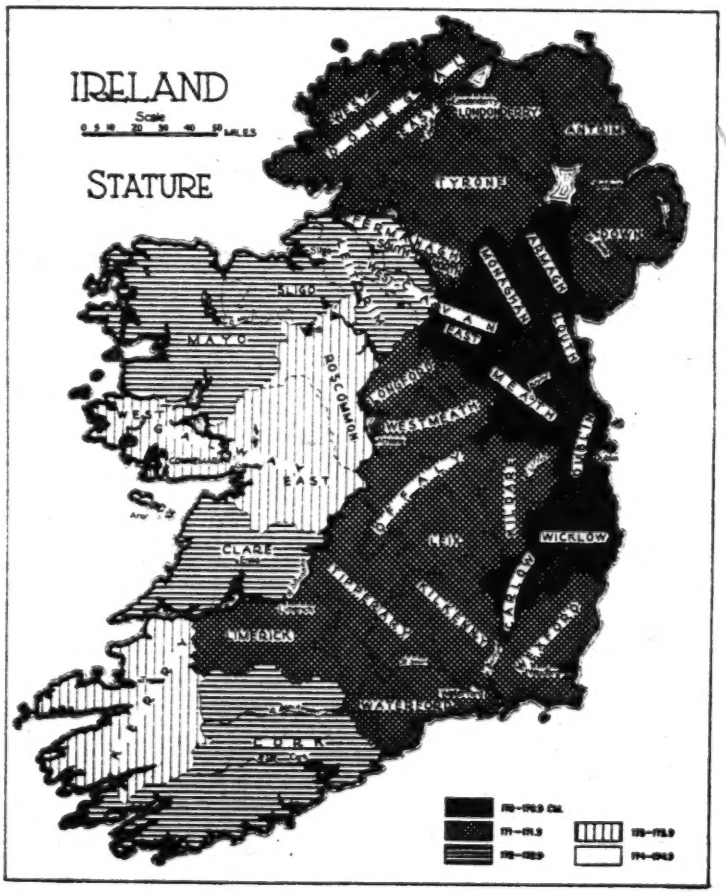

Figure 1

In Tuosist the reason given to me by my father and some other old people was that ill-luck would fall upon Kerry and especially on the parish of Tuosist, if the Corkmen succeeded in forcing the coffin across Leac na gCorp and laid it down on Kerry soil. Sickness, bad crops, and misfortunes of many kinds would follow the corpse, if it were laid beyond the boundary-stone. This is undoubtedly the original reason for the defence of the border on funeral days. A corpse has in many lands for long been regarded as having evil magical power (known scientifically as *orenda* or *mana*) of an impersonal kind latent in itself. In Ireland, for example, fishermen regarded it as unlucky to take the corpse of a drowned person into a boat. Also, *an féar gorta* ("the hungry grass"), which grew wherever a corpse touched the earth, had the power of causing all those who walked over the spot to be stricken with abnormal hunger. Many other instances of the evil power of a corpse might be cited. Just two hundred years ago, Morty Óg O'Sullivan, a native chieftain of Béara in West Cork, who had fought against the British both in Ireland and in many European countries as a member of the "Wild Geese", was slain outside his own house near Eyeries in Béara. The British took his body to a warship at Bere Island and dragged it through the sea in the wake of the ship about sixty miles to Cork. A poet who described this happening wrote the couplet:

Ní raibh aon rath ar an uisce ó Chorcaigh go Béara
Ó tairngeadh tríd an bradán gléigeal.[1]

No fish were said to have since been caught in the sea-route through which the corpse was dragged.

In Sweden, Miss Louise Hagberg tells us, if a corpse were carried over cultivated ground or over lakes, they became thereby unfruitful, and crop-growing fields lost their vegetation. She also says that during the Middle Ages those persons over whose lands a corpse was carried unlawfully had the right to compensation; in Västergötland anybody who carried a corpse across the land of another, without the permission of the owner, rendered himself liable to a prescribed fine.

Thus, the funeral-boundary customs in the Cork-Kerry area, which have died out only in comparatively recent times, seem to fit into the wider pattern of custom and superstition devised to give protection against the magical evil power associated with corpses.

2. Wearing Clothes for the Dead

In the year 1918 or so, an uncle of mine died in the townland of Fehanagh, in the parish of Tuosist, in southwest Kerry. This is my native parish. Jerry Sullivan was my uncle's name; he died at the age of sixty-four. I was fifteen years old at the time, and was spending some weeks of my summer holidays at my uncle's when he became ill and died. I was allowed to remain in the house during the illness, wake, and funeral.

It is still the immemorial custom in that parish to get a suit of clothes specially made by a local tailor when a person dies. The suit is not worn by the corpse in the coffin. Still, it is intended

[1] There has been no luck on the water from Cork to Béara
Since the gleaming salmon was dragged through it.

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

369 though little wealth will come to her through that
443 shop door. But in the scheme of social emphases,
571 these courses are the exceptions. Practically, for a
584 finally successful adaptation, the man must rise through an economic apprenticeship. His is the bread-winning role in social life. Only the bride regularly marries into her new station.

171 We are dealing here with a social form of nearly
369 universal occurrence where a society preserves
443 some trace of patriarchal form. It is a structural
571 necessity where class lines cross-cut a familistic
582 order. In India, for instance, it is immediately recognizable to the sociologist; for Hindu society incorporates into religious or formal law much of the social custom which other civilizations allow to flow on unheeded, unrecognized and unplanned. There, a lower caste often marries its daughters into the ranks of the next immediately above. The practice is known as hypergamy.

In Western Europe hypergamy is present, in some times and places notably so. The French have recognized it realistically. And here in rural Ireland, the countryman practises it, when he can, though he would be much surprised to hear his efforts on behalf of his daughter so pedantically described. Yet even though the name would mystify him, he would understand the substance of the custom. His daughter is to be married in such a way as to bring credit and alliance to the paternal line upon the farm. That line stands to

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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gain a foothold in the world of shops. For that, the countryman is willing, currently, to pay about twice the usual dowry-price.

And in his willing adherence to custom, stability is achieved. The relationship between class and class, like that in the countryside between kindred and kindred, attains some permanence of form. The bride carries social bonds with her; in this case she carries them upward and townward into the shops and pubs of metropolis.

Her brother, on the other hand, carries with him another social function, in his capacity of male. His place is that of a potential fatherhood in a line of patrilineal descent. He carries on a corporate name upon the land or shop. Where he cannot inherit, in such descent, a sure place among his fellows, he must win it. The man is the bread-winner who carves out a place for his line; round him the family must be grouped. The woman, on the other hand, is the uniting force within the grouping. In this dichotomization of social role between the sexes, the Irish town and the Irish countryside, like the Church to which they both subscribe, are agreed. Hypergamy takes its form in the agreement. Along the lines laid down by the social bonds of apprenticeship and hypergamous marriage, the world of the market-town and the rural hinterland are united; along the same lines the flow of the country-people townward moves.

Once again, then, we see how complete the in-

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

struck a rock, thus saving the share, the traces and the ploughman from injury. The tying of the tail-hair to the traces, which were commonly of sugán or fir rope, required a difficult knot known in later days to very few. This undoubtedly ancient practice seems to have been linked with other customs such as walking backwards before the plough horses, burning the corn in the straw, and plucking or clipping wool from the sheep whenever it was required. It appears that we have in this group of survivals an older culture-laver overlaid by newer methods some of which are themselves of high antiquity. There is some evidence that the original simpler wooden plough mentioned below, together with the clod-breaker and the winnowing tray (Chapter 14) belong to the older layer, whereas the improved wooden plough, the harrow and the flail are later arrivals.

English visitors of the 18th century and the writers of the Statistical Accounts published by the Royal Dublin Society have given many particulars of the varying practices of a century and a half ago. From them we select a few observations. The method of ploughing in Co. Clare was to use four horses abreast, the driver walking backwards between the two middle horses. This is also described as "the old method" in Co. Roscommon. Four oxen were employed in Co. Dublin and Co. Tipperary, "never less than four oxen or four horses" in Kilkenny, six in Meath, three in Fermanagh and two in King's County. The large teams of some regions may imply that co-aration had at one time been practised. The four horses of the north Antrim plough-team were contributed or "pooled" by four farmers under the system of "morrowing" or "neighbour dealing" which finds ready parallels in Scotland. In Co. Clare this pooling custom is known as "cooring," and in other parts as "milling." The Irish farm horse, it should be remembered, is a small light breed: except near large towns heavy cart horses are rarely seen.

Nevertheless in the more backward parts the two horse plough seems to have been general, as it is to-day, and it has been supposed that the two-ox plough was standard in early

492 246 ing the hay to the haggard presents itself, quick advantage can be taken of the weather by transporting the cocks as single loads by the simple process of putting a rope round the bottom and hauling them with a horse or two to the haggard. I have also seen a long iron runner placed under the cock, [493] which is thus " sliped " home, but on larger farms a hay-cart is employed. The Irish hay-cart is a specialized vehicle, used for no other purpose : its low platform can be backed against the cock, which is then drawn on to it by a winding gear. This is an interesting example of the versatility which the Irish have shown in developing the two-wheeled cart, their primary mode of transport (Chapter 12). When other horse-drawn implements are employed in hay-making they are frequently [407] old-fashioned in their sturdy simplicity, for example the wooden hay rake or " sweep " with its long ash teeth.

246 In the haggard (" hay-guard ") the stacks are built on prepared foundations of stones and heather or bushes which " draw the wind in under." Sometimes one sees them built around an upright pole, as in the Tyrol and elsewhere abroad. [171] The stacks are either circular (" pikes " in Co. Antrim) or oblong (" havels ") : there are advantages and disadvantages attaching to both shapes and it is doubtful whether, as has been suggested, there is any correlation with regional house-shapes and types. But local styles and methods of finishing the stack need working out. The rush thatch is secured by hay-ropes crossed and recrossed in various patterns or applied as a continuous spiral (Fig. 51).

248 Flax, probably one of the oldest Irish crops, was grown very widely before the Industrial Revolution brought a concentration in the north-east. Small patches are still grown in Donegal for the sole purpose of providing the thatch, the tradition of flax cultivation surviving long after the home industries of spinning and weaving died out. Though mechanical pullers are now being adopted, the flax crop, which must be drawn out, roots and all, is one that lends itself to [476] hand labour. Teams of 8 or a dozen pullers—and sometimes as many as thirty—work together, the men being exchanged or "swapped" between neighboring farms, and a day of flax-pulling traditionally ended with dancing.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

traces. The shafts were also tied by straw ropes to the pegs of a straddle which rested on a back sugán secured in turn by a tail rope of straw. Bridles and halters were sometimes made of horse hair.

The slide car, like so many of the Irish relics we are considering, was found not long ago in the Scottish Highlands and is still used in central Wales. It is common in the Baltic lands and far afield through the mountain country of Europe and the Siberian tundra; and its wide and scattered distribution betokens its high antiquity. In general the slide car is employed for transporting hay and timber in mountain country; and it is of interest to find that in Sweden it is

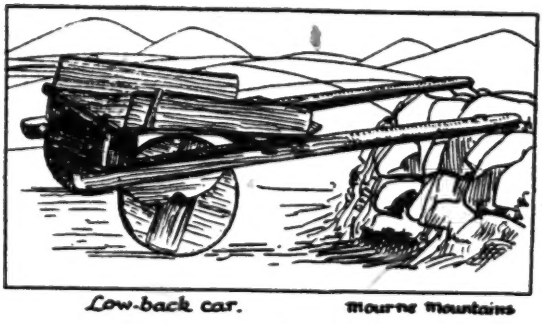

Fig. 60.

especially associated with the mountain dairies which are paralleled by the Irish booleys (Chapter 6). Scandinavian ethnologists have shown how areas which had the slide-car have become regions of the one-horse cart and have generally remained without the four-wheeled waggon. This applies with peculiar force to Ireland. (Pl. IV.)

The older style of two-wheeled cart is that known as the "wheel" or "low-back" car, which survives in the same environments as the slide-car. I illustrate an example from the Mourne Mountains, Co. Down (Fig. 60). The solid disc wheels lie under the body of the car and are fixed to an axle,

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

produce a buzzing noise. The toy is known in Co. Carlow as a "whee-doodle" and in Co. Down, where it seems formerly to have been regarded as a "sacred" thing, as a "boomer." Professor Haddon has described specimens from Co. Antrim and Co. Cork. About the Co. Carlow example in the Dublin Museum Dr. Raftery provides me with the following note. "A boy was whirling it around and an old man who saw him was very angry and told him to take the thing home and burn it, as otherwise he would bring bad luck on the countryside." This was in 1921. I illustrate a "bull-roarer" from Cape Clear, Co. Cork (Fig. 113). Its Irish name is Cláirín Búirthe.

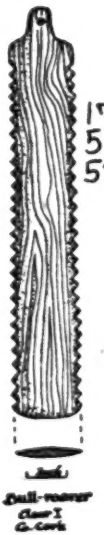

Fig. 113.

It is, of course, possible that some Irish localities may have learnt the use of this toy from stray specimens brought home from regions where it is still in regular ceremonial use, but when we remember all the other Irish survivals we cannot doubt that the bull-roarer is a relic of the past that has lost, or nearly lost, its sacred character. The bull-roarer has an almost world-wide distribution. It is said to have been employed in ancient Greece in connexion with the Dionysiac mysteries. We can imagine its employment in the initiation rites and magical practices of pagan times so picturesquely reconstructed by Professor Macalister in his book "Ancient Ireland." In various parts of the modern world the bull-roarer is used as a rain charm, in raising a wind or producing thunder, in driving game, herding cattle (*cf.* Chapter 6) or preparing for fishing, in rites of initiation and circumcision, in funeral festivities and mask dances: it is a general rule that the instrument must not be seen by women or children on pain of death. In the words of Haddon: "This insignificant toy is perhaps the most ancient, widely spread and sacred religious symbol in the world."

Of great antiquity and wide distribution, the spear-thrower is another instrument which appears to have survived in Ireland as a toy, used as a throwing stick in boys' games. And another toy "not yet connected with any ceremonial usage" but paralleled among the Chinese and the North

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

171 524 American Indians is the buzz, a rectangular piece of wood or a circular disc of metal which is rotated on a twisted string, by drawing the hands apart, to produce a buzzing sound. It is recorded that the young weavers of 19th century Belfast were fond of playing with the " bummer," and I saw the toy, called a " snorer," in use in north-east Antrim this summer.

857 524 Many examples could be given of children's games and rhymes which retain memories of ancient rites. Thus it has been suggested that the game known as " Draw a pail of water " is " the attenuated survival of the religious rite of water worship." Similarly there are hints of foundation sacrifice in " the Devil's Bridge," of marriage by capture in " Nuts in May," of marriage by purchase in " Lords from Spain " and of funeral rites in " Jeannie Jo " and " Green Gravel." These games are not necessarily long established in Ireland—some of them were probably introduced by planters, as in the Appalachian region of the U.S.A.—but they are of wide occurrence and considerable age in other parts of Europe. 754 It is worth putting on record that the aid of magic is still sought in causing illness by making and injuring a wax model of someone to whom ill is wished. It is not five years since a case which resulted in death occurred within a short distance 789 821 of Belfast. I have no doubt that instances of curious love charms, of raising a wind and so on could still be found, though the old method of burying a black hen alive to bring a fair wind is probably forgotten. The so-called " protective formulæ " such as " God bless the work " and " I wish you luck of the baste " are common currency.

241 289 Harvest customs that deserve mention are the cutting of the last sheaf and the wearing of harvest knots. In the north of Ireland, as in many other parts of Europe, it was customary, so long as sickles were the reaping tools—the practice became modified with the use of scythes—for the harvesters to fling their hooks at the last plaited remnant of standing corn. This was known under various names such as neck, churn, hare, granny, carline and cailleach or " collya."

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 between building materials and techniques and types of thatch, and when slates or tiles are adopted for roofing it will be found that old roof patterns are faithfully followed by local builders. An interesting variant of the mud house occurs around Lough Neagh, where the main weight of the roof is carried on three massive purlins the ends of which can be seen projecting outside the upright gables (Fig. 9). I suspect these houses were built to take tall looms, for the use of purlins means that there are no couple-ties crossing the room, but the distinction between the purlin and the coupled-rafter roof may be fundamental. The purlin-roof may go back to the log house with which it is associated, for example, in Scandinavia. One advantage of the upright gable over the hipped roof is that it made the extension of the house by the addition of further rooms much simpler. It could have been copied from medieval churches or planters' houses.

For constructional reasons, and also because window glass was long a luxury, the windows of the traditional cabin were few and small and placed for preference on the side away from the prevailing winds. Many of the surviving houses, moreover, were built in the early nineteenth century, when tax was levied on the number of windows. The ever-open door, its lower part closed with the additional half-door, admitted most of the light. The half-door is often regarded as peculiarly Irish, but in fact it is an old-fashioned feature which has lived on longer in the [171] western isle than in Great Britain. It is found in parts of the north of England, for example in miners' cottages in Co. Durham, and it is said to be characteristic of Chinese houses. In Ireland the half-door serves to let in the light while keeping out unwanted animals, and it makes a convenient arm-rest for purposes of conversation or contemplation. This is how a countryman justified it to me: 'A man standing at the open door would be wasting time, but leaning on the half-door he is just passing time'. To give maximum efficiency, the window openings widen internally, an arrangement behind which there may be a lingering tradition of defence against unwelcome strangers. At any rate most of the light came from the doorway, and thus one sees the force of the picturesque phrase referring to the unwanted visitor as one who 'darkens

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 coupled roof was borrowed from the frame-house introduced by English planters: it may, however, have evolved from the wattled house if this was supported, as seems likely, by crucks. The coupled rafters are joined by one or two cross-ties secured by wooden pins, and pegs driven into the rafters hold in place the long purlins which support a layer of branches or thin laths of bog-fir. On these rests a warm blanket of carefully fitted sods (scraws), an essential element of the traditional roof, keeping out cold and damp and serving as a hold for the rods (scollops) with which the thatch, over the greater part of the country, is secured (Fig. 11). The sod undercoat is an

342 171

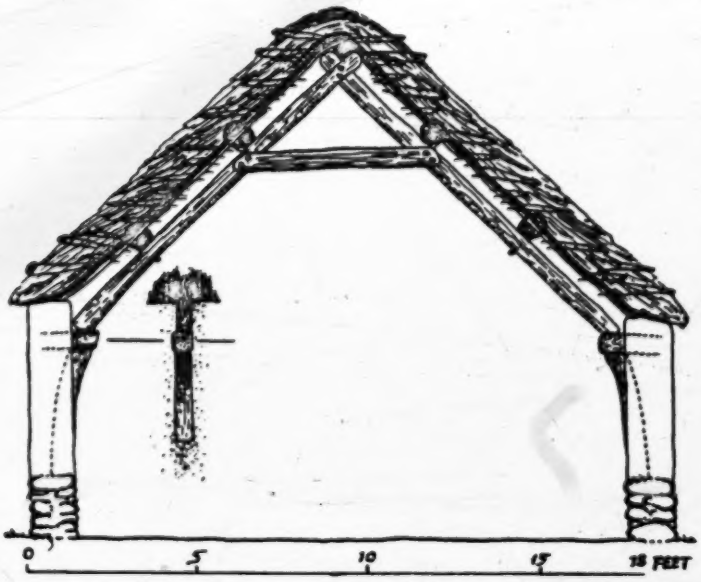

FIG. 11. Cross-section through old house, Maghery, Co. Armagh. The coupled rafters are supported on uprights set in the mud walls. The scraws are sewn to the purlins with fir-ropes. Successive layers of thatch are secured with rods pinned down with hair-pin scollops.

archaic element which overrides all differences in house and roof construction and must be of high antiquity. It has been taken over from an old culture-layer—it finds parallels in

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

THE THATCHED HOUSE

Norway and other sub-arctic regions—and from an economy where straw was not available. We have already noticed that cattle-herders in the early seventeenth century built their booley houses of boughs coated with long strips of green turf. The long sods made a portable roof which could be slung on a pole between two pack-horses.

The sods were cut in strips from carefully selected spots where a close-grazed sward gave a thick mat of grass-roots. They measure two to three feet wide and about one and a half inches thick, and as they were cut they were rolled on to a stick and carried like a carpet. Their roofing sods, wrote Thomas Campbell in 1778, 'they call scraws (they are rolled up like scrolls) but they would be better called hides, for they are flayed off the earth.'[1] In the north, where the flachter or breast-plough was used for paring sods (Chapter X), the scraws might be as much as twelve or fourteen feet long, though short turves were also used. They were carried on to the roof up two ladders and laid on grass upwards, overlapping at the ridge on the side away from the wind. They overlapped laterally also, the scraw on the windward side running over its neighbour on the lee (Fig. 14). In many such details careful attention was paid to the wind and the rain, for example the strongest purlins were put on the side whence driving rain was most to be expected. Similarly the stoutest couples were placed at the weather end of the house, and they were sometimes given a slight inclination towards the wind. A seemingly artless cabin may thus be found to show the most careful adaptation to local conditions.

The first thin layer of thatch was, in some parts of the country, sewn on to the purlins with a thatching needle—the older pattern has a large eye to take hay-rope (Fig. 15)—and the roof might then be finished in one of several regional styles. In the eastern part of Co. Down, and sporadically elsewhere, the straw is laid on in specially prepared bundles or stapples[2] (Gaelic *Stapull*) and the thatch is plastered down at eaves, gable and ridge with clay or mud. A few scollops are added at ridge and eaves. This is probably a very ancient method,

[1] Thomas Campbell, *A Philosophical Survey*, 146.
[2] K. Danaher, *Béaloideas* (1948), 203–17.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 which rest on the thatch directly over the eaves (Fig. 12, 1). This method has an extremely primitive air but it has the advantage over the pinned ropes in that it is simpler to keep the ropes taut. A still older method, frequently seen on thatched stacks and rarely on buildings, is to let the weighted ropes hang from the eaves. In Donegal a century ago boulders weighing fifty or sixty pounds are stated to have been suspended on hay ropes.[1] This very primitive mode is found also in the Inner Hebrides.[2] Roped thatch in general seems to be characteristic [171] of the Atlantic seaboard of Europe and areas around the North Sea.

The most widely distributed mode of thatching is by means of scollops, or sally rods (sometimes hazel, briar or bog-fir), which pin down the thatch. In well-finished work the rods are hidden, for if exposed they tend to let water seep through the scraw, but it is customary to leave a row exposed at the eaves and ridge and against the gables, where the outer layer of straw should lie snugly. The exposed scollops are often arranged [531] in lattice patterns, and the expert thatcher delights in showing his skill and leaving his grace-mark in finishes of various designs which are practical as well as decorative, serving for example to distribute the rain and prevent 'guttering'. Thus twists of straw (bobbins) at the gables carry the drips evenly to the ground. When the ridge—and sometimes the eaves as well—is also adorned with a row of bobbins the scollop-thatched roof can be most attractive (Fig. 13, 1). A thatched chimney occasionally adds the last finishing touch. The word scollop is derived from the Gaelic, and it is natural to assume that this most widely distributed of all styles—from north Antrim through the heart of the Irish midlands to south Cork—is [171] indigenous. But rod-thatching is widespread in England and on the continent, and it may have reached Ireland with the Celts. There are various ways of pushing in the scollops: they may be thrust in at each end (Fig. 14) or bent into wooden staples resembling large hairpins, which secure the ends of horizontal rods (Fig. 13, 1). The scolloped thatch is perhaps best suited to, and is almost universal on, roofs which are

[1] *Dub. Univ. Mag.* 41 (1853), 715.
[2] Colin Sinclair, *Thatched Houses* (1963), 36. [Text continues on p. 56]

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

strong horizontal beam, the brace-tree, which may extend right across the kitchen from wall to wall, four or five feet out from the fire and five or six feet from the ground. Or one end of the beam may rest on a supporting jamb set under one corner of the canopy. In that case—and invariably where the front door is adjacent—there may be a draught screen of wood mud or stone —the jamb-wall—built out from the fireside and terminating in the jamb, so as to partition off the fireside. This curtain-wall is pierced by a small window known as the entry or spy-hole, through which an approaching visitor can be spied from the fireside through the open door (Fig. 18). I have seen a few jamb-wall houses of this type in Co. Armagh where the brace-tree nevertheless continued to the side-wall, so that the visitor had to stoop under it on entering the house. If a door is swung on the jamb-post a small hall or internal porch is readily provided. This is characteristic of developed houses of traditional style in the Lagan Valley near Belfast, and a further refinement is to hang a mirror over the jamb-window, a looking glass replacing the plain glass of the peep hole and reflecting changing fashions. The jamb-wall, called also in Ulster the hollan-wall, is well-known under that name in the south of Scotland and the north of England and may thence have reached eastern Ireland in plantation times. In Cumberland it was termed the sconce and in Lancashire the speer, which was the name of the screen which crossed the end of the halls in the Oxford colleges. James Walton tells me that in north Yorkshire the jamb post, called the witch post, is occasionally found to be covered with designs intended to protect the hearth from evil spirits. Sprigs of rowan are tied to its top for the same purpose. The partitioned hearth is characteristic of eastern and southern Ireland: it extends into the Central Lowlands but it is almost entirely lacking in the west and in the north-western province of the outshot-house to be described below. Dr. Desmond McCourt tells me that he knows of two or three hybrids—having both the outshot and the partitioned hearth—in the foothills of the Sperrin Mountains, where two cultural provinces meet.

The smoke canopy varies in shape and method of construction from one region to another. The commonest type is made of

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

laths and wattles (willow, hazel or briar), plastered with a mixture of clay and cowdung or ashes and coated with limewash. In parts of the south hay or straw ropes soaked in mud (putogs) were used, twisted between a frame of horizontal rungs and plastered over with mud or limewash. In Co. Armagh one occasionally sees a heron's wing hung on the brace: it is used for dusting the hearth. The jamb-walls—and internal walls in general—were traditionally constructed of wattle and daub, or of mud or wood. The wattle and daub construction is undoubtedly an old technique which, in the days of plentiful timber, was much more generally used in house-building. Internal partitions carried up to the roof, however, probably followed the adoption of the chimney flue, and if so this innovation must be reckoned as a contribution to privacy as well as to comfort. We note in passing that wattlework found its last traditional use in house construction in the wicker doors of the west, and in the windbreaks of the north, bundles of hazel or birch branches (wassocks) set up on the windward side of the door. The stone-built external porch must be regarded as a relatively novel addition to the traditional house style.

Wooden or stone seats are often built in near the hearth, and the wall behind the fire, protected by a flagstone or a built-up hob, usually has a keeping hole on each side of the fire (Fig. 19). Known as boles in Antrim and coves in Cavan, these may be elaborated in Achill Island, for example, into two- or three-tier wall-dressers whose ancestry lies in the stone house tradition of the mountain country. There is an old belief that the left-hand keeping hole belongs to the woman and the right-hand one to the man of the house. Here you may see in safe keeping, on one side the woman's knitting, on the other the man's clay pipe. Stone dressers were a characteristic feature of the huts at Skara Brae,[1] where also Professor Childe found evidence that the women occupied the left side of the fire and the men the right. In the Hebridean black-houses the left-hand side of the fire was the woman's quarter.[2] Similarly in the old turf houses of the Highlands, 'the women were invariably ranged around the central fire on one side, the men on the

[1] V. G. Childe, *Skara Brae*, 15.
[2] A. Mitchell, *The Past in the Present*, 52.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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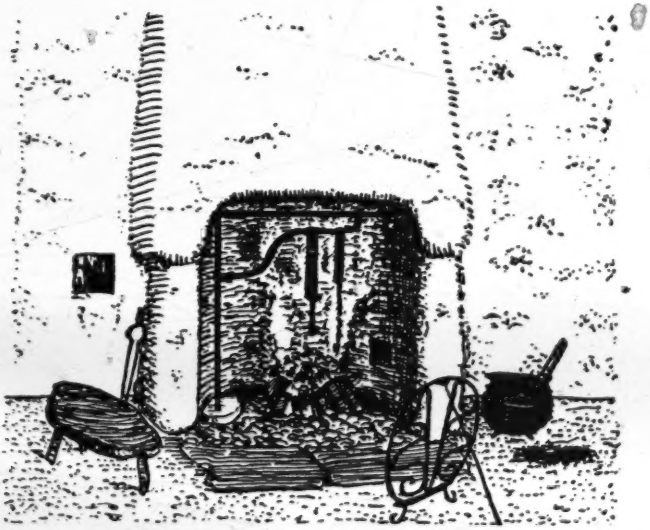

FIG. 19. A Donegal hearth, with crane, creepie and bread-iron. Pot and pot-hole on right.

other'.[1] It is interesting to notice that it is the Mongol usage to allot the right side of the yurt to men and the left side to women.[2] We are surely dealing with a very ancient tradition related perhaps to the ordered routine of a pastoral nomadic life. For the Mongols the right and left sides were symbolized respectively by horse and cow. In the humblest Irish farms, [514] which lack sanitary conveniences of any kind, it is customary for the women to use the byre and the men the stable.

354 821 If we now turn to the methods of suspending cooking pots over the fire we shall see how the woman's functions are best carried out on the left side. Besides the convenience of this for a normal right-handed person, there lies behind it the notion that for good luck significant actions involving the food supply—such as ploughing, casting a net or taking a pot off the fire—should follow the direction of the sun's movement in the sky. Thus the crane on which the pots are hung is almost

[1] Hugh Miller, *My Schools and Schoolmasters* (1857), 96
[2] E. D. Chapple and C. S. Coon, *Anthropology* (1946), 539.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

quartzites. The bed-wing gives a narrow room additional width where it is most needed, near the fire. It may be that sufficiently long timbers for sizeable rafters were not easily procured in these mountain regions of poor soil. We may be dealing, however, with a feature which has died out in other regions and which has lived on in difficult country. The built-in wall-bed—the half-neuk—is known in the Orkneys, the Faroes and in the Hebridean black-houses and is characteristic of humble societies in other parts of the world. It is possible that in Ireland the wall-bed attests contacts with western Scotland which have repeatedly influenced that part of the country running south-westwards from Co. Antrim following the 'Caledonian grain' to Connacht. In any case the wall-bed appears to be restricted to the extreme north-western fringes of Europe.

The open hearth with all its associations is truly the heart and centre of house and home. The fire is, with her children, the 'care' of the woman of the house. 'A woman can never go to the fire', runs an Irish saying, 'without tampering with it.' The manifold duties of the housewife keep her moving about the hearth, tethered to it for most of the day. Her last duty at night is to 'smoor' it, burying a live turf in the ashes to retain a spark which can be fanned into a blaze next morning. This custom was fortified by the belief that the good folk, the fairies, would be displeased if there were no fire for them through the night. I have sat at fires which, it was claimed, had not been allowed to go out for over a century, or for as far back as family memory could go. It is to the fireside seat that the visitor is invited, for this is the place of honour, and it is around the fire that tales of old time are told. The magic of the open fire, playing upon the fancies of generations who have gathered round it, has engendered a host of beliefs and portents. The fire can give warning of wind and weather, of lucky and unlucky visitors, of marriage and death. Above all, it is a shrine to which ancestral spirits return, a link with the living past.[1]

[1]Since this chapter was written A. T. Lucas has published (in *Arctica*, 11, 16–35) an account of Wattle and Straw Mat Doors in Ireland. See page 65.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

323 until these very last times, although a great number of English
415 potters have set up their trade'.[1] No tradition of hand-made pottery survived in Ireland as it did in the Barvas ware of Lewis in the Hebrides. On the other hand another ancient craft
415 of prehistoric origins persisted into living memory in the making
322 of wooden noggins in which milk and porridge were taken. They are small stave-built vessels of oak, having one stave projecting

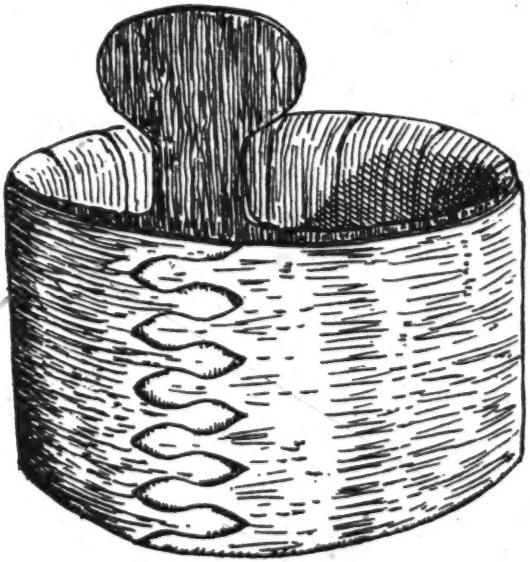

FIG. 22. Wooden noggin, Co. Down. Height of rim, 5 in.

to serve as a handle. The staves are held together and the single-piece base kept in place by a thin band of ash joined by interlocking tongues (Fig. 22). This method of fastening the wooden band is found on the similar 'piggins' of parts of Britain, also in Scandinavia and throughout the Asiatic Arctic region, and it may well derive in these islands from an ancient circumpolar culture. The noggins were made by skilled craftsmen who

[171]

[1]Gerard Boate, *Ireland's Natural History* (1652), 159.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

were known as noggin weavers. Cheap delph has now taken the place of the noggin, but the word survives in a phrase I have heard applied to a child who is thriving on his food: 'he wants a stave out of his noggin'.

The art of pot-making declined and in many parts of the country almost disappeared after the late Bronze Age, when bronze cauldrons came in to provide serviceable cooking-vessels. Some archaeologists have related this decline to the climatic deterioration of the late Bronze Age, but it is more reasonable to associate it with an increase of pastoral pursuits and a diet of whitemeats. The bronze cauldrons were highly prized: from Gaelic literature we know that they were the special property of the head of the house and they seem to have taken on something of the magic of the early pots. They were sometimes credited with strange virtues such as the ability to yield to each guest the piece of flesh to which his rank or occupation entitled him, and they occupy a prominent place in folk-lore and legend.

It is interesting to notice that the bulk of the earliest prehistoric pots in Ireland are of plain brown burnished earthenware, faithful copies of the leather prototypes proper to a pastoral people. This western European Neolithic pottery is one of the indications of a common substratum in the early civilizations of Atlantic Europe. The round-bottomed vessels simulated round-bellied leather containers, which may well have continued to be used for cooking into historic times. We know that whole cow-hides were employed for the purpose in Elizabethan times. This is undoubtedly a survival of older custom: we find it among hunting peoples, for example the Indians of Labrador are in the habit of preparing broth in a vessel made from the belly of a caribou. A relic of the substitution of pots for skins may perhaps be seen in the persistent Irish belief that the money obtained from the sale of a cow-hide should be used for the purchase of a metal vessel. The Scots, as Froissart and Burt tell us, cooked their beef in skins stretched on four stakes. Fynes Moryson says of the Irish: 'Flesh they seethe in a hollow tree lapped in a raw cow's hide, and so set over the fire.'[1] From prehistoric times we have many ancient

[1]Fynes Moryson, *The Description of Ireland*, 228.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

cooking places, which have been popularly known to Irish-speakers as *fulachta fiadha* (deer roasts), consisting of mounds of burnt stones usually set in marshy places. Excavations have shown that they contain dug-out trunks or plank-lined pits sunk in peat where water was heated by hot stones. Hundreds of these mounds are known in Cos. Cork and Kilkenny and they occur sporadically in other parts of the country, as also in Wales and more rarely in England and Scotland. Some Irish examples have been dated to the Bronze Age, though it is believed that their construction continued into the Middle Ages.[1] They are interpreted as the bivouacs of summer hunting parties, and would represent an archaic tradition preserved by the privileged classes, but they have their humble counterparts in the stone-lined pits filled with hot turf, in which, I have been told, peasants would cook their potatoes when working some distance from home.

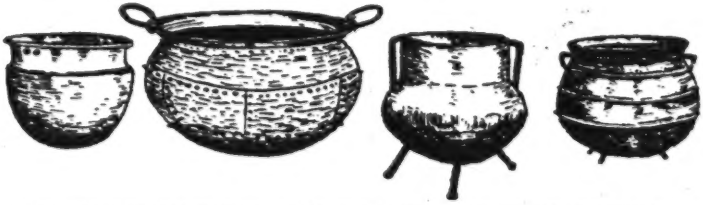

FIG. 23. Cooking pots: round-bottomed suspension vessels through 4,000 years: Neolithic (earthenware); late Bronze Age (bronze); medieval (bronze); and modern (cast iron).

The essential continuity of form and function is strikingly demonstrated by a series of Irish cooking pots such as is illustrated in Fig. 23, from the round-bottomed Neolithic bowl with its suspension holes to the present-day globular iron pot with its twin lugs and its three stubby legs—a concession to a hard uneven floor. The three-legged pot is the countrywife's maid-of-all-work and it is only slowly giving way to flat-bottomed pans and kettles. The oven-pot also, a kind of Dutch oven, is widely utilized, and the pot-roasts which it cooks to perfection have replaced spit-roasted meat. It is said to get its other name, the bastible, from the fact that it was first made at

[1] M. J. O'Kelly, *J.R.S.A.I.*, 84 (1954), 105–55.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

Barnstaple in Devon. The oven-pot may be suspended over the fire but in the south rests on a trivet: the lid is dished so that live turves may be placed on top. It is used also for bread-baking, though the griddle is most commonly employed for this purpose (Fig. 24). 415

Fig. 24. Oven-pot, griddle and trivet.

Here we come to a fundamental fact in the geography of the Irish hearth—the absence of the built-in oven. The one exception which proves the rule is its occurrence in the extreme south-east, where, in Co. Wexford, the baronies of Bargy and Forth have retained many features dating from their English settlement in medieval times. Over most of Ireland even when a cooking-range is installed in the hearth, the oven is not used for bread-baking, for oven-bread is not a native food. In central Europe on the other hand the bread-oven, originally of clay, is of great antiquity and the stone or metal oven has come to dominate the fireplace. The difference in bread-types is related on the one hand to environment and economic organization and on the other hand to a whole set of eating habits and ethical values. 354 [262] [171]

Thin bread, or bread in cakes, made without yeast, has been from early times the common bread in most parts of Atlantic Europe, from North Scandinavia to the Basque Country, including Highland Britain and Ireland. Farther afield it is typical of many Mediterranean areas and parts of Asia. In north-western Europe it is closely linked with the cultivation of oats, though home-baked wheaten bread is made in the same way and mixtures with maize and with potatoes are similarly prepared. Potato bread (fadge), a mixture of wheat flour and boiled potatoes, is a popular food which surely had its origins in difficult times. 262 252 171

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

POTS AND PANS

252 As throughout Highland Britain it was the dramatic fall in the
262 price of wheat in the 1880s, thanks to imports from America,
171 that changed the eating habits of the people and led to a decline in the consumption of oaten and barley bread. The commercial baking of oven-bread from imported wheat is thus a fairly recent development virtually confined to the large towns, especially the milling ports, and its distribution through the rural areas explains the ubiquitous bread-vans of the country roads. We should probably make an exception of the English-settled parts of the east coast in the Pale as well as in Bargy. Dublin and Drogheda have a rare advantage in Ireland in that, thanks to their relatively dry climate, grain need not be kiln-dried before milling. The town bakeries cater for country tastes by providing an extraordinary variety of cakes and farls as well as
[256] standard loaves. One of the big Belfast bakeries turns out some seventy varieties of plain and fancy bread which are distributed over several Ulster counties. In the Scottish Highlands, similarly, most of the bread consumed comes from a Glasgow factory: home-made, even locally-made, yeast-bread is almost
[493] unknown. 'The van' is therefore one of the necessities of life: its forerunner was the tea-van, famous for its fast high-stepping horses, once a familiar sight in the Irish countryside.

The baking of thin bread has steadily declined under this
262 urban competition. White bread and stewed tea are woefully
252 inadequate as a staple diet but there were perhaps greater gastric evils in indigestible soda bread made with unboiled water from surface wells. The use of buttermilk and above all a large consumption of butter were, however, traditional. On balance the housewife has profited, for she was truly the slave of the fire. Thin bread has the disadvantage of going stale quickly, and a good housewife was expected always to have fresh bread ready. Labourers have been known to refuse to work on farms where there was not a daily baking of bread. The baking board or trough hung ready to hand on the wall,
251 and the meal was stored near the fire to keep it dry (Figs. 18
[857] and 21). Old people have told me how, when they were children, they were called on periodically to tramp the meal in its wooden chest or ark, treading it down with bare feet to drive out the air and lessen the risk of its going musty. In Wales the meal-

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

chest was considered to be the best place to store a well-dried ham. 251

Originally the flat round oatcakes were baked on a flat stone, and such flagstone griddles continued to be used in the nineteenth century in parts of Co. Kerry. A late seventeenth-century traveller wrote: 'Their general food is a thin oatcake which they bake upon a broad flat stone made hot, a little sheep's milk cheese, or goat's milk, boiled leeks and some roots.'[1] In Yorkshire the flagstone was built-in over a separate fire and gave way slowly to the iron 'bakestone'. The bread was hardened in front of the fire, resting against a three-legged 'bread-stick' of the type shown in Fig. 25. Representations of bread on the sculptured high crosses of the Early Middle Ages show just such round discs. The traditional form of thin bread, however, is the farl (fardel), shaped like a quarter-circle. The large circular cake is marked with a cross so that it can be readily broken into quarters (farls) after baking and hardening. The 'harning' is done on a wrought iron 'harnen stand' or toaster which has taken the place of the simple bread-stick. It is worth noticing that the Beltane cakes, formerly eaten at the fires which were lit on hill-tops on May Eve, were baked, in Scotland at any rate, before the fire without touching iron.[2] I have seen a few examples of carved stone breadstands which were designed to bake the bread in front of the fire, and no doubt rough stones were originally used for this purpose. The baking stones are elaborately carved and often carry dates ranging, in Scottish examples, from 1674 to 1791.[3] Irish examples seem to be confined to Ulster and they probably represent one of the many culture traits introduced from Scotland (Fig. 25, 6). The wrought iron toasters are tastefully designed and exhibit a great variety of ornament. Specimens from north Ulster and from Scotland display an almost Spanish exuberance in the intricacies of their spiral terminals, and one would like to know if they have their counterparts along the Atlantic coasts of Europe. They are now for the most part museum pieces, for one rarely sees them in use and great numbers have found their way to the scrap heap in the last half century.

252 354 171 [262]

[1] 'A Tour in Ireland in 1672–74', *J.C.H.A. Soc.* x (1904), 96.
[2] J. M. McPherson, *Primitive Beliefs in the North-east of Scotland* (1929).
[3] A. Mitchell, *The Past in the Present* (1880), 239.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

social and family centre'.[1] The table has never supplanted the fireplace as the focus of social living, a function it has served since the dawn of humanity. As so often happens, folklore endorses this finding: there is an Irish saying that it is unlucky to shake hands across a table. The table or 'board', which in the English language gave its name to a committee, has not replaced the fireside as the place where the Irish countryman talks—and talks business. When food is left out for the fairies or for visitors from the other world it is placed in front of the fire, and at Hallowe'en seats for the returning dead were arranged around the fire.

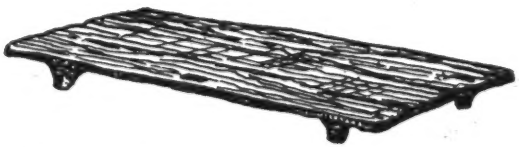

FIG. 26. Table, cut from the solid, from a Co. Armagh bog. It measures 20 in. by 12 in.

Similarly the fireside, not the table, attracted whatever means of illumination was available. The hob-lamp took the place of the table-lamp. Even when paraffin came in the oil lamp was still hung in the chimney. The older native oils, derived from fish and burnt in open lamps, were very unsavoury, and it was expedient to allow the fumes to escape with the chimney smoke. The iron crusie or open oil-lamp, its shape almost unchanged since classical times, was to be seen nearly everywhere around the coast until late in the last century (Fig. 27) but the paraffin lamp quickly swept it out of existence. Medieval crusies from Spain, Italy and north-western Europe are very similar to recent Irish examples, and it was from the Rhineland, it is said, that the crusie was taken to Pennsylvania, where it first succumbed to the new mineral oil. Stone moulds of uncertain age known from Scotland and Ireland show how the iron pans were hammered into shape. Inland, the place of the crusie was taken by resinous splinters of bog fir kept by the fire till tinder dry,

[1] Å. Campbell in *Folk-Liv* (1937), 234.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

were buried under great cairns such as those at New Grange on the River Boyne. Clusters of ruined clochauns surrounded by old field walls litter the hillslopes of the Dingle peninsula near Fahan; but we can only guess at the age of these 'beehive farms'. Some of the large oval clochauns would give standing room to as many as sixty people. Many of the existing farms in the district have at least one round clochaun, used for keeping pigs or poultry or for storing milk or turf (Fig. 37).

In the Aran Islands both oval and circular stone-roofed buildings are to be seen, though most of them are ruined. O'Flaherty in the seventeenth century described them as being 'so ancient that nobody knows how long ago any of them was made'.[1] The oval houses measure up to 21 ft. by 12 ft. internally; they are rectangular inside and some have two opposite doors (Pl. 8). Smaller round huts are also known.[2] In north-eastern Ireland, too, in north Louth and south-east Down, both round and square clochauns have been constructed down to recent times for housing pigs and poultry: a few are still in use.[3] The corbelled pigsty is known also in Wales,[4] and has been recorded in Caithness and the Orkney Islands.[5] Very similar corbelled buildings attached to old farms on Dartmoor are said to have been used as ash houses, for holding the embers taken from the fire at night.[6] One example, now used as a chicken house, is described as a winnowing hut.

Other parts of western and southern Europe can show both ancient and recent examples of corbelled constructions, though most of them, in so far as such a timeless style can be dated, were probably erected within the last two or three centuries, and some of them are known to have been built within living memory. They are found, either in ruins or serving as shelters or as animal- and tool-houses, in south France, especially in and around the Central Plateau, in Spain, Portugal and Majorca, in the heel of Italy, in the western Balkans and in Crete, where the mountain dairies appear to be very similar to the stone

[1] R. O'Flaherty, *H'Iar Connaught* (1684), 68.
[2] Å. Campbell, *Folk-Liv*, 1938, 173–96; G. H. Kinahan, *P.R.I.A.*, 10, 25
[3] R. H. Buchanan, *U.J.A.*, 19 (1956), 92–112.
[4] I. C. Peate, *The Welsh House* (1944), 42.
[5] A. Mitchell, *The Past in the Present*, 71.
[6] *Trans. Plymouth Institute*, XVIII (1944), 34.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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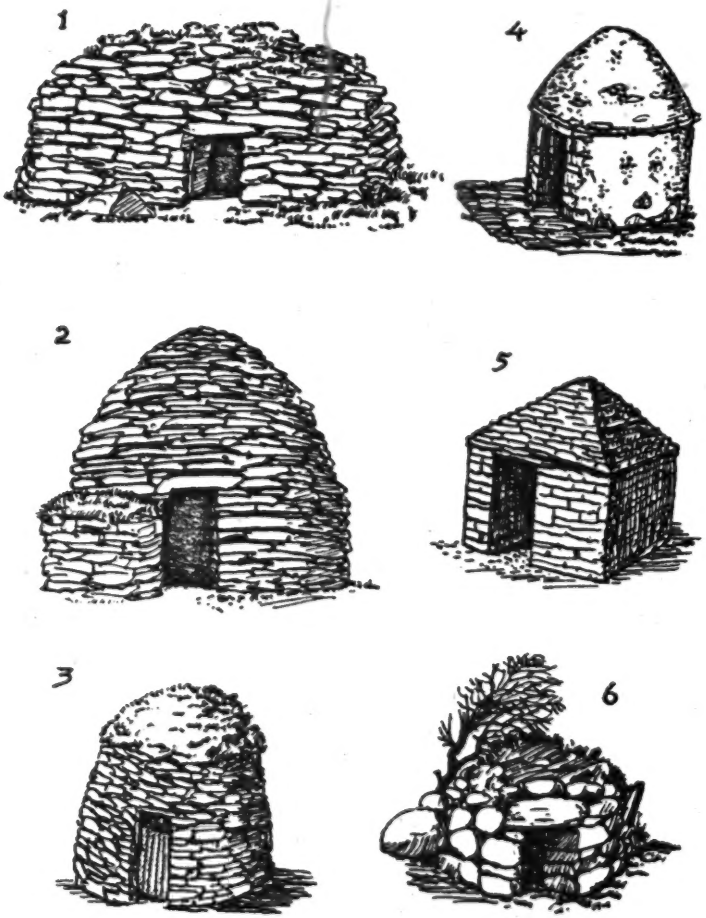

FIG. 57. Clochauns. (1) Oval house, Aran Island. (2) Hut, Skellig Michael. (3) Poultry house, Dingle. (4, 5) Pigsties, Co. Down. (6) Sweat-house, Co. Leitrim.

171 booley huts and shielings of Ireland and the Hebrides. The corbelled buildings of Vaucluse, in the mountains behind Avignon, are both round and rectangular, the latter bearing a striking resemblance to Irish oratories of the type of Gallarus,

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ER6 Rural Irish ER6

Co. Kerry, which is believed to date from the sixth or seventh century. Whether or not the origin of this style of building in western Europe should be placed, as I am inclined to believe, in the megalithic period, there can be no doubt that it represents, in various parts of the Mediterranean-Atlantic route, the survival of an ancient method of building. It has had a long life in exposed hilly districts where suitable materials lay to hand, especially where the interests of simple shepherds and cattlemen were dominant. Villages of houses with domed or conical stone or mud-brick roofs are a feature of south-east Italy and Syria, and of the dry belt stretching eastwards to India.

Some of the Co. Kerry farmyard clochauns are still used for storing milk; their thick walls are admirable for maintaining even temperatures. Their association with the pig may also be an archaic feature, for the pig was perhaps the first domesticated animal to be brought to Ireland, and although much altered in breed, it still thrives best in warm, draught-proof surroundings recalling the sultry jungles of its original south-east Asiatic home. The well-worn phrase about 'the gentleman that pays the rent' not only summarizes the role of the pig in recent historic times but carries a humorous hint of the veneration in which the pig was once held in southern and western Europe. Here archaeologists have postulated an early Neolithic matriarchal 'swine-culture', vestiges of which would explain the fact that the pig was the only cult animal of the oldest of the Greek mysteries, the Eleusinian.[1] Later pork became the favourite food of both the Roman and Celtic worlds. In parts of Ireland the pig is driven into the house for luck on May morning, and the pigsty figures in a strange ritual for certain cures, e.g., a sufferer from mumps should be led with an ass-halter three times round the sty! Further, there is surely a supernatural quality in an animal which is reputed to be able to see the wind! In many parts of the British Isles, especially in Scotland, it is unlucky to speak of a pig when fishing at sea. Superstitions about the pig are numerous in Scotland, and in the Highlands there was formerly a tabu against keeping pigs and eating pork. This was apparently true also of those parts of the north of Ireland which have had close connections with the Western Isles.

[1] C. O. Sauer, *Agricultural Origins and Dispersals*, 57.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

4/12 [244] drill-cultivation has replaced lazy-beds over most of the country.

Some ridge-making tools have almost entirely disappeared, 4/12 for example the mattock and the breast-plough, which were once [178] characteristic respectively of the south-west and the north-east of the country and which may still be seen occasionally in Cos. Kerry and Antrim. The mattock ('graffan') is a tool of ancient [171] lineage which finds its parallels in Wales, in Spain and Mediterranean lands, and throughout the tropics (Fig. 48). In Kerry and west Cork it has had many uses—for breaking sods and

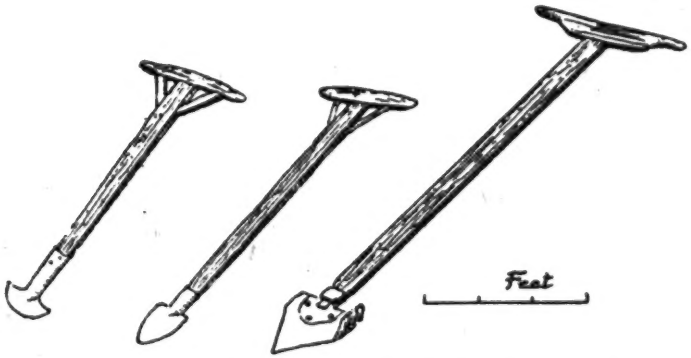

FIG. 45. Flachters or breast-ploughs, north-east Ireland. (1) North Antrim. (2) Co. Tyrone. (3) Mid-Antrim.

clods on the ridges, for loosening the earth of the furrows before shovelling, and also for cutting sods for ridge-making, for 'paring and burning' and for roof-covering. Arthur Young describes the process of graffaning a field by rolling the sod with the foot as it was cut: it was reckoned very heavy work.[1] The breast-plough or flachter (Fig. 45) served the same purpose in Cos. Antrim and Londonderry and earned the same reputation. This instrument is now largely restricted to paring bogland in preparation for turf-cutting. During the second world war I broke in a neglected mountain garden by making lazy-beds with a flachter and I heartily agree with the verdict of an Antrim labourer: 'half a day with it was enough for any ordinary

[1] A. Young, *Tour*, 2, 10.

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ER6 Rural Irish ER6

HARVEST

243 Corn harvest did not begin until a certain set day which differed in various parts of the country, and the appointed day was a time of much excitement. The following description of [171] the Reaping Blessing in the Scottish Highlands would probably apply to Ulster, though I have not found a record of it in Ireland. 'The day the reaping began was one of commotion and ceremonial. The whole family repaired to the field dressed in their best . . . the father of the family took his sickle and, facing the sun, cut a handful of corn. Putting it three times sunwise round his head, the Reaping Blessing was sung'.[1] We know that in Ireland it was the custom for the first sheaves cut to be scutched or lashed, that is the grain was beaten out without using the flail. The winnowed grain was parched over the fire, ground in a quern and boiled in time to make a breakfast for the reapers.[2] This ceremonial breakfast undoubtedly preserves archaic practices.

Reaping with hook or sickle is by no means uncommon on little hill farms where fields are small and uneven, but the days of the great 'gatherings' are no more, when down to late in the last century as many as seventy men might have been seen at work. Most of the lore of these reaping boons has passed away unrecorded, and we get only glimpses of the terrible strain imposed on the toilers and the compensating gaieties. The [558] pressure was most severe when to the rivalry between workers was added the drive of a pace-setter, for it was a mark of disgrace not to keep pace. In Ulster the leader of the boon was 'stubble hook', so called because his ridge was the first of the 'set', next the stubble. (A set was the number of ridges equal to the number of reapers in the boon). The driver, called 'corn-land', took the rig or land next to the standing corn, and between the two the other reapers on their ridges would strive to keep a straight line. 'A bad shearer', runs the Ulster saying, [539] 'always gets a big rig and a blunt hook'. But a spirited reaper, I have been told, 'would die upon the rig before he would suffer "corn-land" to pass him'. Between each set a rest was taken at the 'land-end' and it was an interlude of 'crack and courting'. If we may judge from a Scottish custom, any visiting

[1] A. Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica*, I (1928).
[2] *Béaloideas*, 10, 293.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

492 tied bundles on to the straddle-pins, and both sheaves and firewood are occasionally carried on light V-shaped wooden
482 frames. A similar carrying frame is known from Spain. There are several varieties of straddle, and a pattern found on Clare Island, in which one side engages in a hole bored through the other side, finds a parallel in the Shetland Islands and among the Lapps of north Norway: it could be of Norwegian origin. For long hauls the pack animal was undoubtedly the chief means of transport until the coming of the spoke-wheeled cart. For short distances the burden rope (Chapter XV) or the carrying creel was more convenient and it is still not uncommon to see the back-creel, the carrying basket or the hand barrow used for transporting turf or wrack over rough, soft or slippery ground (Fig. 57).

[171]

493 In some parts of the country, especially along the east coast,
483 a form of sled fitted with a box body is kept for the transport

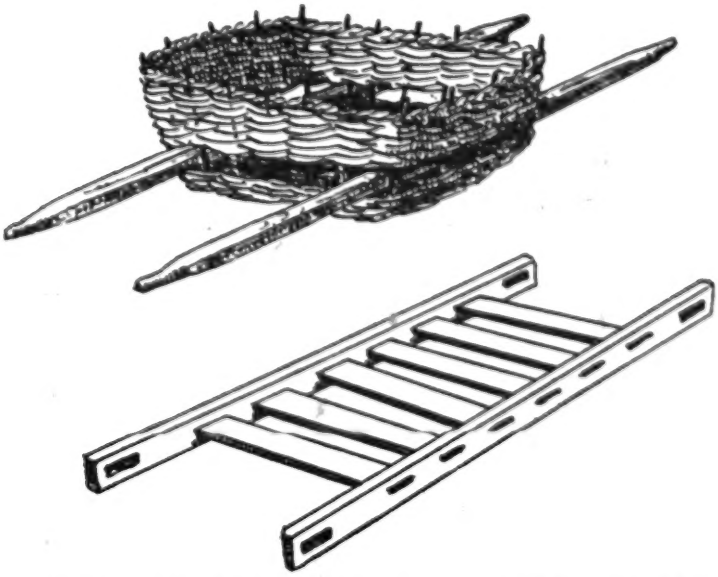

FIG. 57. Turf-basket, Co. Armagh and hand barrow, for carrying nets, Co. Antrim.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

493 in addition to its strength, is reputed to have special sliding qualities. A forked slipe can be dragged over rough, trackless, 483 boulder-strewn hillsides, where it will make and widen its own path as it goes. In such circumstances, given a favourable gradient, it can be man-hauled, and the persistent use of similar sledges for transporting large stones in other regions of megalithic culture such as the Dordogne—and indeed in Assam for surviving megalithic cults—hints that it comes down to us from very early times. The present distribution area of the forked [171] sledge in Europe, from Scandinavia round to the western Mediterranean, can be correlated with many archaic culture-elements.[1] Its preparation calls for no tool more sophisticated than an axe—even a stone axe would suffice—and as I have watched huge stones being sliped from the fields I have easily imagined myself transported to a clearing in a long vanished Neolithic forest.

The standard flat slipe is a rectangular platform supported on two low parallel runners which may be shod with iron. It will be found on many farms and serves numerous purposes—for hauling stones, potatoes or turf, or for transporting the plough or the harrows from field to field (Fig. 58, 2, 3). There is, however, a simple, light slipe, made either of wood or of iron, which is kept specially for moving the wheel-less plough (Fig. 42). The wooden form finds exact parallels in Sweden and the east Baltic lands.

In the Antrim Glens, where topographic conditions and isolation have preserved an unusually full series of archaic vehicles, I have seen a light forked slipe loaded with sacks of peat being man-hauled, the forked end being lifted off the ground by a rope bearing on the puller's shoulder. This is in effect a slide-car, and although the Irish slide-car is always pulled by a pony, it may be noticed that the Swedish slide-car, used mainly for carrying hay, is often man-hauled. No doubt the forked form is the more primitive and there is some evidence to suggest that it was from a forked slide-car that the first European carts and wagons were evolved by the addition of

[1] E. E. Evans, 'Some Archaic Forms of Agricultural Transport in Ulster' in *Aspects of Archaeology* (Ed. W. F. Grimes), (1951), 108–23; J. M. Mogey and G. B. Thompson, *Man*, 51 (1951), 3–5.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

493 the block wheel was independently invented in north-western Europe, or at least adapted from the log roller as a native response to the novelty of the spoked wheel.

A feature of the Ulster slide-cars which distinguishes them both from Scots and Welsh examples and from most other slide-cars is the provision of separate wooden runners or 'shoes' which are pegged to the ends of the shafts and can be replaced when worn out. They have the effect of reducing somewhat the slope of the platform and its load. Formerly a special slide-car was kept for carrying corn, the sheaves being supported by a [171] hooped frame of osiers which finds parallels in Sweden and Finland. Another archaic feature was the harness, which was [492] constructed, until quite recent times, entirely of wood, straw and withies (Fig. 69).

Slide-cars, 'strange survivals from the twilight of history',[1] 171 are found not only in Highland Britain and the Baltic lands but 493 in many parts of east central Europe, in Siberia, China, Siam and the Indian Deccan. Such a distribution points to a dispersal in high antiquity, probably from western Asia. There is no direct archaeological evidence of ancient slide-cars but it has been plausibly argued that the well-known 'cart tracks' of Malta were made by slide-cars some 3,000 years ago.[2] This humble vehicle is well suited to simple societies, whose transport needs are few, and to country, especially hilly country, without made roads, where the wheel would be out of place.

In Ireland the wheel-car clings to the same districts as the 493 slide-car and serves much the same purpose, but it may occasionally be used for longer journeys by road, for example to take an animal to the fair. (Slide-cars are very injurious to [494] roads and were driven off them by ordinances against their use on the highways). On steep slopes the wheels, being secured to a rotating axle, act as a brake on each other. Measuring only some two feet in diameter, they are composed of three segments of wood dowelled together as in the oldest known Mesopotamian wheels, and shod with an iron hoop. They revolve under the car inside the shafts, so that the body must be raised to give clearance. It is supported by vertical struts morticed into the

[1] A. C. Haddon, *The Study of Man* (1898), 161.
[2] H. S. Gracie, *Antiquity* (1954), 91–98.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

make the butter rancid, since the Irish, he says, preferred strong butter.[1] An eighteenth century writer states that some of the buried butter was

> So strong, a dog with help of wind,
> By scenting out, with ease might find.[2]

Others have claimed that it was buried to mature and purify it, and one writer has seen an explanation in the need to have butter available at Lent. It is reasonable to suppose that the surplus butter of summer would be stored in this way once the preservative properties of peat were known, but the practice is certainly pre-Christian in origin. None of the Irish finds has been securely dated—the majority of the wooden containers have an ageless 'medieval' appearance—but a discovery in Skye was satisfactorily dated to the very beginning of the Christian era (it contained not only cowhairs but some strands from the head of a fair-haired dairymaid).[3] I am inclined to think that a practice which came to be generally adopted for utilitarian reasons had its origin in magic, and that deposits were originally made in the hope of appeasing the powers of evil and inducing an abundant flow of milk from the pastures.[4] The custom may well have originated during the crisis of the climatic deterioration in the last centuries of the pre-Christian era. Surviving folklore is full of the magic properties of butter, and in the west of Ireland it is known that lumps of butter were thrown into loughs and springs through which cattle were driven in order to restore them to health. It seems from the accounts of discoveries in the bogs that some of the butter containers had been thrown into a bog hole rather than buried. Later, no doubt, it became the practice to bury butter in order to preserve it, but if this had always been so I cannot think that there would have been so many unclaimed deposits left to await the slane of the turf-cutter. It should be noticed that the custom of preserving butter in bogs or in moist earth is found also in Scandinavia, Iceland, India and Morocco.[5] It is interesting that bog butter

[1]Sir W. Petty, *The Political Anatomy of Ireland*, 82.
[2]W(illiam) M(offatt), *The Western Isle*, Canto 2.
[3]J. Ritchie, *P.S.A.S.*, 75, 5–22.
[4]E. E. Evans, *U.J.A.*, 10, 59–65.
[5]ibid., 59.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

as the work of specialists (Fig. 71). The pampooties of the Aran Islands deserve mention here. Made of calfskin, but formerly of sealskin,[1] these one-piece shoes were once doubtless widely worn and have kept their hold in Aran because of their suitability for wet rocks and frail curraghs. The rivlins of Scotland and the Highland *bròga* were very similar and I have seen rawhide shoes of the same type from Norway and the Pyrenees. They all have the hair outside and are secured by lacing back and front.

The wight serves both to hold corn, in filling a sack for instance, and to convey peats from the stack to the fireside: perforated it becomes a meal-sieve (boran) for sifting the skins (seeds) from oatmeal, or a buttermilk sieve for taking out the last grains of butter from the churn. The winnowing tray or dallan is a larger version, and it, too, may be perforated to allow the wind to pass through as the corn is shaken out on to a spread cloth. There are, up and down Ireland, many bold windy Shilling Hills where the 'shellings' (husks) were, in past times, separated from the grain in this way (Pl. 7).

This brings us to the flail and its 'hanging' (the mid-kipple, hooden, gad, middling, or tug) which was commonly a thong of cow-, horse-, sheep, or goat-skin, though sometimes of rabbit- or eel-skin or a cord of flax. The flail, the proverbial 'stick-and-a-half', consists of a three to four feet long helve or hand-staff, usually made of ash, and a shorter beater, swingle or souple of hazel or holly. There are two principal methods of 'hanging' the parts together. In one variety, the tie passes through two leather caps lashed over the ends (Fig. 72, 1). This appears to be a variant of the common English flail-hanging, where, however, the cap is made of steamed ash or yew and there is no linking piece. Its distribution in Ireland, down the east coast, points to derivation from England. Modifications, occurring as far west as Donegal (Fig. 72, 1*a*, *b*), have the linking thong passing through a hole made either in the helve or in the beater. Kevin Danaher states that the capped flail is characteristic of central Europe: it is believed to have first appeared in north France in the early Middle Ages.[2] The

[1] O'Flaherty, *H'Iar Connaught*, 59 (footnote).
[2] *J.C.H. and A. Soc.*, 60 (1955), 6–14.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

412 other method of hanging has a somewhat peripheral distribu-
• 171 tion in Europe (Scandinavia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Switzerland,
284 the Pyrenees) and also in Ireland, and as its simplicity as well as its distribution suggest, it is the older type. The tie passes around grooves cut in both hand-staff and souple (Fig. 72, 2) though again there are variants, one end of the tie, for example, being passed through a hole (Fig. 72, 2*a*). The grooved hanging, it is claimed by its users, is superior to the capped because the join is almost universal and there is no need to turn the halve in the hand when flailing. The holed fastening may be the most ancient method of all: it is found in parts of Atlantic Europe and the Baltic lands, but in Ireland is apparently restricted to Ulster (Pl. 6, 2).

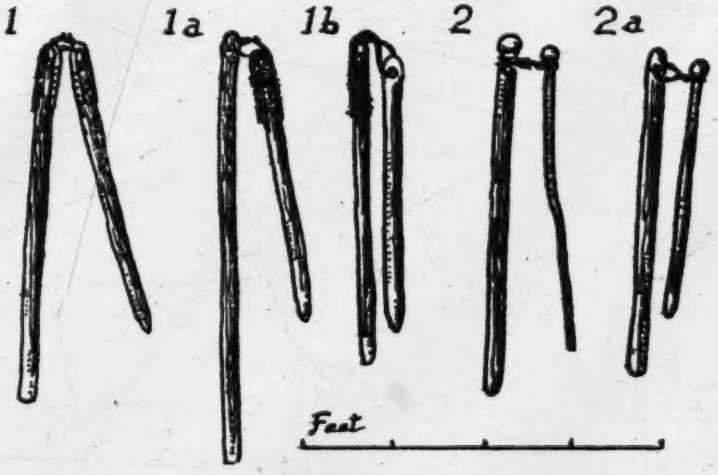

FIG. 72. Flails. (1) Co. Meath. (1*a*) Co. Armagh. (1*b*) Co. Donegal. (2) Co. Cavan. (2*a*) Co. Antrim.

243 Ancient and rudimentary as the flail is, requiring for its
412 making no tool save a sharp knife, there are some thrashers
171 who dispense with it, 'scutching' the corn instead with a stick or 'lashing' it over a barrel, a stone or a board (Plate 4). Many a small farmer in the north of Ireland harvests his seed grass in this way. The scutching method is used also in the

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

Pyrenees and in Africa, but the flail, apparently spreading through western Europe in post-Roman times, in time replaced it almost everywhere, to be in turn displaced by the mechanical thrasher. Thus the sound of the flail has almost gone from the countryside. The best thrashing place is the floor of the barn above the byre, with its opposite doors to draw the wind and advertise the flailer's industry. Such barns, however, were not built outside the planted districts before agrarian changes and improvements spread in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Ireland knows nothing of the carefully built thrashing floors of England and Scandinavia. At best on the farms lacking a barn a thrashing board was sometimes kept, a square wooden platform raised a few inches off the ground. A good thrashing floor should bend to meet the flail, and in Scandinavia, for instance, great pains were taken in the old days to construct floors which would make the flails sing. They were occasionally strung with wires, and to magnify the echo of clay floors a horse's skull was buried under each corner.[1] It has been thought that this purpose was secondary to the luck it was hoped would follow from what was originally a foundation sacrifice. In Ireland traditions of the burying of horses' skulls under the floors of dwelling houses are both widespread and well authenticated. The usual explanation again is that this gives the house an echo, but it is also said to be lucky, and Sean O'Sullivan concludes that the custom of burying skulls began as a substitute for foundation sacrifices.[2] In Armagh 'the frontal bones of a horse's head are regarded as being peculiarly sonsie; they were often buried in barn floors and under the thresholds of dwelling houses for that reason.'[3]

In time, the expressed object came to be to magnify the music of the singing flails as well as that of the ballad-singing and dancing before the fire. The space between the doors of the old style kitchen-byre, it will be recalled, was a favourite thrashing place in times past. The Briget's Crosses above the door would have blessed the thrashing as well as the cattle. It

[1]Albert Sandkelf, *Singing Flails* (Folklore Fellows Communications, Helsinki, No. 136), (1949).
[2]Seán Ó Súilleabháin, *J.R.S.A.I.*, 75 (1945), 45–52.
[3]J. Donaldson, *Upper Fenns in 1838*, 77.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

501 whether seal-skin or the hide of a cow or horse, were untanned.
[281] I can add little to the historical account given by Hornell, but it should be noticed that the paddle curragh, covered with horsehide, was common in Erris, Co. Mayo, around 1830[1] and that, to judge from an entry in a Rathlin Island account book of 1760—'paid for one mare's hide for the boat, 1s. and 6d.'—the paddle curragh was used there also.

501 The long rowing curragh with its high pointed nose is
396 widely distributed on the west coast from Donegal to Kerry, and its seaworthy qualities are known to many from its dramatic participation in such films as *Man of Aran* and *Shark Island*. This vessel too is built bottom upwards, but the frame is pegged, not into the ground but into a strong wooden gunwale frame, single or double, which Hornell believes was borrowed, along with the fixed thwarts which give lateral rigidity, from plank-built boats. Yet the method of pivoting the oar on a single tholepin, originally perhaps a strong projecting rib of the curragh frame, rather than in a rowlock, suggests that the rowing curragh has native forerunners. There are many variations in constructional details from one district to another but nearly all the vessels are now built of laths and all are covered with tarred canvas. An emergency repair is contrived by an operation which, if you are a timid passenger, looks like 'burning your boats': the curragh is inverted, the tar around the hole is set alight and a calico patch stuck on when the tar has run. The curraghs are rowed by two, three or four men, and the largest are said to have a carrying capacity of two tons. In Kerry they are masted to carry a small lug sail. A feature of
[777] many curraghs is a small bottle of holy water, a protection against misfortune, suspended on a string in the bows.

501 The looms of the long narrow oars overlap so that the oars-
man pulls cross-handed. A heavy wooded counterweight, the bool, is attached near the loom, and the oar pivots by means of a round hole in the bool on a single wooden peg, the tholepin, driven into the gunwale (Fig. 78). This method of rowing is found on many lake and river boats in Ireland, perhaps es-
[171] pecially in those areas, such as the Shannon and Lough Neagh,

[1] P. Knight, *Erris in the Irish Highlands* (1836), 56. See also *Pocock's Tour* 1752, 64.

 [Text continues on p. 240]

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

where curraghs were formerly known. But it is also characteristic of Scottish cobles and the boats of some English lakes. The inshore fishing boats of Co. Antrim also had booled oars,[1] and farther afield the single tholepin is said to typify the rowing boats of Madeira, the sardine boats of Portugal and some vessels of the Upper Nile. These often use a grommet, as do the boats of the north-east coast of England.

Sea-going curraghs are put to many uses, for inshore net fishing, for setting lobster pots or long lines, for gathering kelp and for carrying freight, livestock and passengers. But the most spectacular purpose to which they have been put is for hunting the basking shark or sunfish from whose liver, before the advent of paraffin, oil for lighting was obtained. A single fish will yield from seven to ten barrels of liver. Measuring up to forty feet in length, the basking shark is one of the world's largest fish and though harmless—its diet is minute copepods—its bulk makes it a formidable adversary. These fish move down the west coast in summer, and in early May they haunt the Sunfish Bank thirty miles off Achill Island, where they come to the surface in the morning and evening. The bank is remarkable for the break of the tide on it, although it lies between seventy and ninety fathoms near the edge of 'soundings' —the continental shelf—and a heavy swell makes conditions difficult for small boats. Here and elsewhere the sunfish used to be harpooned from curraghs, but the advantage lay with decked vessels which could stand by for several days. In the early nineteenth century as many as thirty or forty fish were sometimes killed on the Sunfish Bank in a single day of fine weather. Nowadays the sharks are taken in strong nets fixed to island headlands around which they swim. They are occasionally seen off the other Irish coasts, where they cause great havoc if they get involved in the fishing nets.

Of the small open clinker-built boats of traditional type which takes the place of the curragh on the north, east and south coasts, no systematic study has been made. Some of them betray their Norse inheritance in their lines or their names, for example the Wicklow skiff and the drontheim (Trondhjem) of the north coast. These boats are double-ended—unlike the cur-

[1] S. McSkimin, *The History and Antiquities of Carrickfergus*, 276.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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been recognized by the courts. 'Bobbing' for eels with a ball of worms attached to a string is practised on dark stormy nights, and on the River Bann a vicious-looking eel-rake is used to jab among the river weeds. Its teeth of sharp steel, often discarded hackle-pins, are set an inch apart in the end of a long pole. Bone pins of prehistoric date recovered in quantities from the bed of the river may have been put to a similar use, and this method of catching fish, probably of ancient origin, is widely distributed. There are specimens of eel-rakes in the Danish museums (Fig. 79). A very similar eel-comb is known in China, and a herring rake, used by the native fishermen of north-western America and mounted with sharp bone teeth, was first described by Captain Cook in 1778.[1] For taking salmon, poachers in the River Barrow use a staked net fashioned into a conical trap, and trout are taken in the north of Ireland in home-made 'loop nets' large enough to bridge small streams (Fig. 80). Salmon are also 'strokehauled' with naked hooks, and gaffed when within reach of the river banks. Trout are taken not only by 'ginling' (tickling) but also with a 'dull' or horsehair noose.

[171] ●

Dr. Went has made a careful study of Irish fish spears and the interested reader may be referred to his paper.[2] It may be mentioned that two of the three classes of eel-spears which he describes have been recovered from crannogs of the Dark Ages: they are the barbed spears known as rock- or sun-spears, so named from the conditions which are required for the eels to be impaled, and the more common mud-spears, which are within the law and of which excellent specimens can still be seen in parts of the country. They have flat tines, notched at the sides to prevent the enmeshed eels escaping. Spears of this type are plunged blindly into the mud. Consequently they are often very large and heavy, a seven-pronged example from the River Bann weighing over nine pounds and having a handle 30 feet long. Old specimens have a circular aperture at the junction of each pair of tines which facilitated the removal of the eels. The advantage of the mud-spear, which has a much wider distribution than the primitive looking rock-spear (which is apparently

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[1] *Captain Cook's Third Voyage*, Ed. C. R. Low (N.D.), 395.
[2] A. E. J. Went, *J.R.S.A.I.*, 82 (1952), 109–34.

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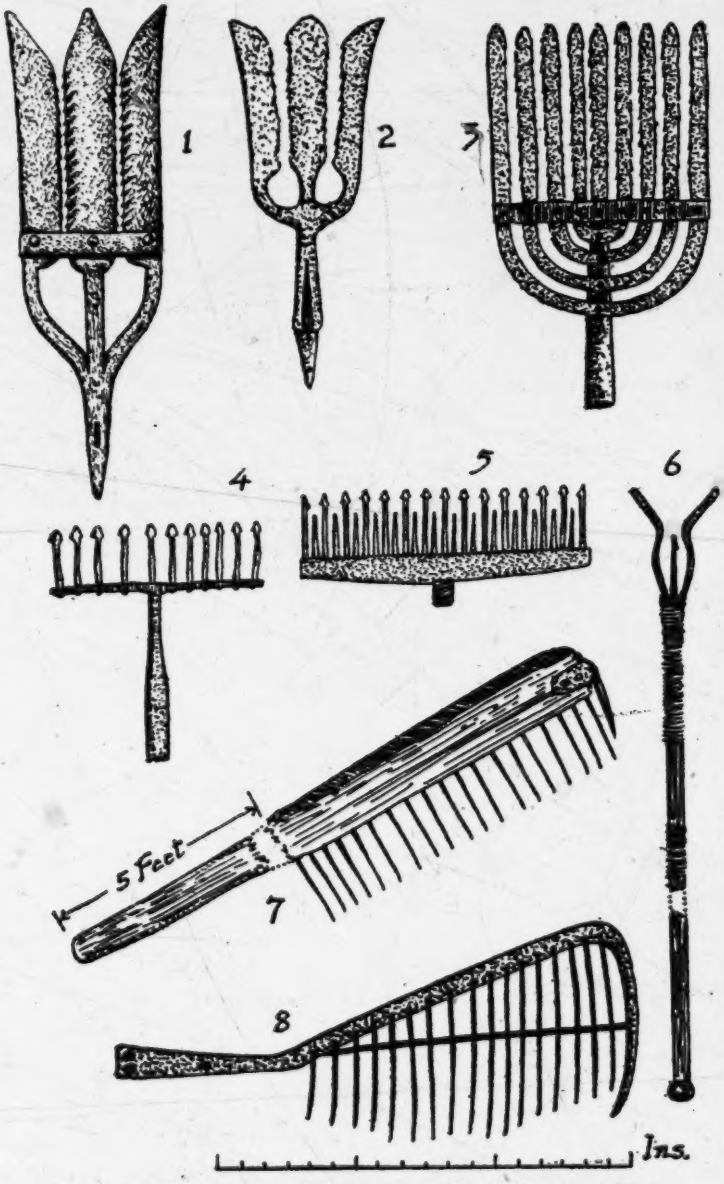

FIG. 79. Eel spears and rakes. (1) Mud-spear, Co. Antrim. (2, 3) Mud-spears, Co. Westmeath (after Went). (4, 5) Rock- or sun-spears, Co. Westmeath (after Went). (6) Wexford harbour eel-spear (after Went). (7) Eel-rake, River Bann (after N. C. Mitchel). (8) Eel-rake, Denmark (National Museum, Copenhagen).

● [171]

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

line grows as if by magic as the quills rotate in nimble fingers. A fresh supply of hairs is inserted from time to time by removing the plugs. I illustrate an example of this fascinating apparatus made for me by Mr. T. J. Barron of Knockbride, Co. Cavan (Fig. 81). Mr. A. T. Lucas has described the Cavan

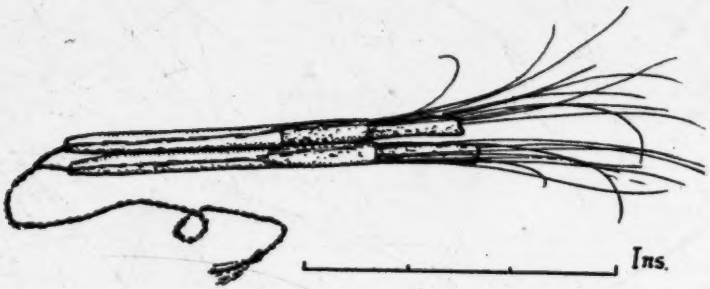

FIG. 81. Quills used for making horsehair fishing lines, Co. Cavan. The quills are rolled between the forefingers.

specimens and others from Co. Mayo.[1] In Cavan the lines were made for bream fishing: the bream were both split, salted and dried and stored fresh in little ponds on the lake shores. Around the coasts—I have seen examples from the Aran Islands and from Co. Down—a more complicated machine was made for twisting long lines of hemp, three spindles being rotated by pulling on an endless cord twisted round each spindle.[2] A very similar device is employed in China for making bamboo ropes for raising coal in primitive mines. On the shores of Lough Neagh the long lines are manufactured in rustic rope-walks. These night-lines, which have tended to replace draft-nets, are set in lengths of up to four miles. The season of yellow (feeding) eel fishing runs from March to October. It is illegal, as we have mentioned, but shows no signs of being given up. The eel fishermen claim immemorial rights and are not deterred by the fines imposed when they are caught. Their vocabulary, like that of the men who work the eel weirs on the River Bann, has many words which have come down from Gaelic and perhaps from

[1] A. T. Lucas, *Journal of the Galway Arch. and Hist. Soc.*, 24 (1951), 111–14.
[2] E. E. Evans, *Mourne Country*, Fig. 68.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

527 Christianized, cling to the preparations made on St. Briget's Eve, the last day of January. On that day rushes are fashioned into protective charms known as Briget's Crosses, a name
527 which illustrates how the church has won over pagan symbols,
778 for the 'crosses' take the form of either swastikas or lozenges,
301 and comparative evidence suggests that they are magic symbols of suns or eyes (Fig. 85). A three-legged swastika, presumably an old form, is reserved for use in the byre: its shape may be compared with the Celtic triskele. The lozenge-shaped charms have their counterparts in many parts of the world. The Huichols of Mexico make similar charms of wool mounted on a bamboo frame: known as a 'god-eyes', they bring good health and
• [171] long life to children.[1] A Californian Indian charm made of grass or rushes is very similar. In the Old World similar magic 'squares' have a wide distribution, in Europe, Africa, Tibet, Burma, Assam and Indonesia, and farther afield in Melanesia, Polynesia and Australia. Among the Nagas of Assam the squares, made of coloured thread, are placed on the graves of women and protect them against evil spirits.[2] In Sweden and Estonia straw squares are strung up as Christmas decorations and tied to the straw masks worn during Christmas games (Fig. 85).

Briget's Crosses are believed to protect the house and the livestock from harm and from fire. No evil spirit could pass the charm, which was therefore hung above the door of house and byre. The rushes must be pulled, not cut, on St. Briget's Eve, and care must be taken to fashion the crosses from left to right, with the sun. As a rule they are left in position until replaced the following year, though I have seen byres with many crosses thrust into the underthatch, the decaying accumulation of annual offerings. In Co. Galway similar crosses made of wood or straw were also placed in the rafters at Hallowe'en, and the discovery of a partly burnt rush cross which had been deposited in a megalith in Co. Limerick points to a more general cult of the 'cross'.[3] A 'love-knot' of similar shape, fashioned out of sedge leaves, is known from South Wales.

[1] F. Toor, *A Treasury of Mexican Folkways* (1947), 72.
[2] H. E. Kauffmann, *J.R.A.I.*, 73 (1943), 101, 106.
[3] S. P. O'Riordain, *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, 1 (1936), 36. For a study of Briget's Crosses in Co. Armagh, see T. G. F. Paterson, *U.J.A.*, 8 (1945), 43–48.

 [Text continues on p. 270]

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

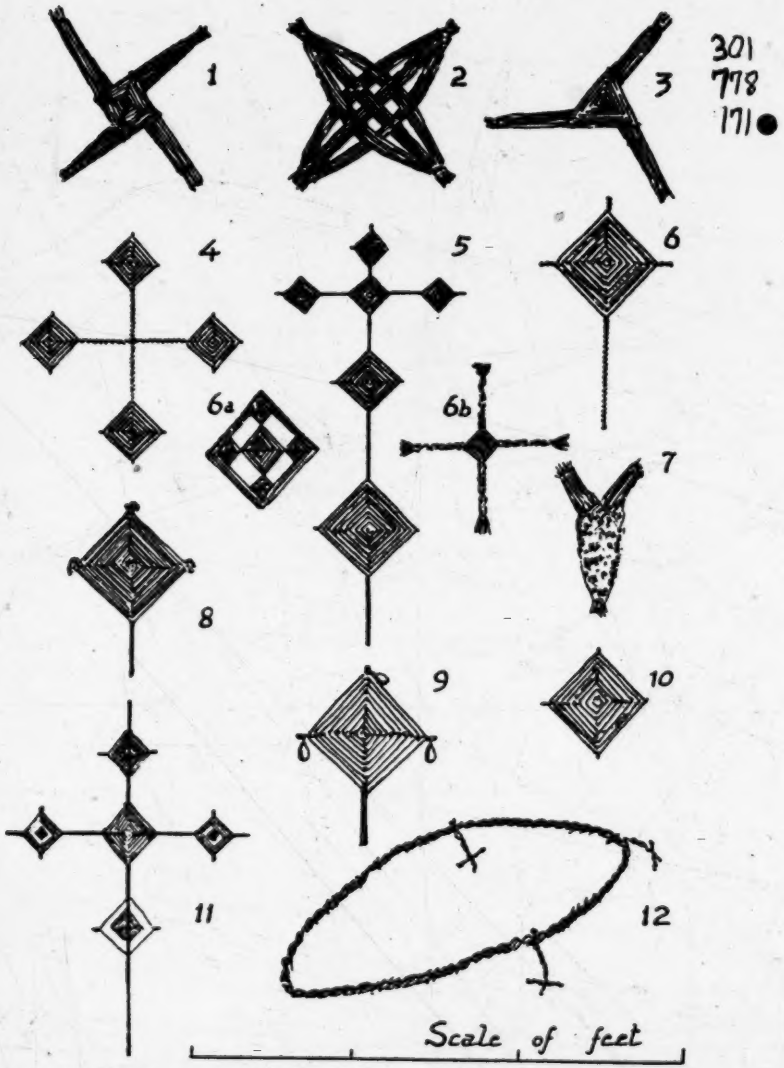

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FIG 85. Briget's Crosses and charms. (1–7) all made of rushes, are from Co. Armagh (in County Museum, Armagh). (8) is a Naga thread-square (after Kauffmann). (9) is a Wailaki charm of rushes (after Kroeber, *Handbook of the Indians of California*). (10) is an Estonian straw-square, worn as decoration on straw hats at Christmas (see Fig. 88, 5). (11) is a Mexican 'God-eyes' made of woven wool (after Toor). (12) is a Briget's Girdle (in National Museum, Dublin).

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

WEDDINGS AND WAKES

Maria Edgeworth, 'more matches were made at wakes than at weddings.' The most frank account of the nature of the games I have come across reads as follows: 'They were placed under the conduct of some peasant of the district who excelled in rustic wit and humour, who went under the title of "Borekeen", and whose orders were carried into force by subordinate officers, all arrayed in fantastic habiliments. The "game" usually first performed was termed "Bout", and was joined in by men and women, who all acted a very obscene part which cannot be described. The next scene generally was termed "Making the Ship', with its several parts of "laying the keel", forming the "stem and stern", and erecting "the mast", the latter of which was done by a female using a gesture and expression, proving beyond doubt that it was a relic of Pagan rites. The "Bull and the Cow" was another game strongly indicative of a Pagan origin, from circumstances too indelicate to be particularized. The game called "Hold the Light", in which a man is blindfolded and flogged, has been looked upon as a profane travestie of the passion of our Lord; and religion might also be considered as brought into contempt by another of the series, in which a person caricaturing a priest, and wearing a rosary, composed of small potatoes strung together, enters into conflict with the "Borekeen", and is put down and expelled from the room by direction of the latter . . . "Turning the Spit" and "Selling the Pig" are the names of two others of those games; in that called "Drawing the Ship out of the Mud" the men engaged actually presented themselves before the rest of the assembly, females as well as males, in a state of nudity, whilst in another game the female performers attired themselves in men's clothes and conducted themselves in a very strange manner.'[1] From other sources we learn that boys and girls, in some games, wore hides and appeared representing bulls and cows.

Parallels to these practices can be adduced from the so-called simple societies in many parts of the world, and as in Ireland Christian missionaries found it very difficult to suppress the rituals enacted between death and burial. The keening of the corpse likewise carries us through time to the earliest emotions of human societies faced with the mystery of death. The liberal

[1] J. G. A. Prim, loc. cit.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

764 distribution of food and drink on these occasions, and the provision of tobacco or snuff—a magic substance in Negro Africa—
●171 are widespread practices. In an Irish wake the distribution of tobacco and clay pipes follows a well-established routine. Curative properties were attributed to snuff left over from a wake, and the pipes were sometimes buried, apparently often in or near a prehistoric burial place, for quantities of old pipes not infrequently turn up in archaeological excavations of such sites. Among preliterate peoples in Africa ritual demonstrations similar to those of the wake games usually form part of ceremonies directed towards ancestral spirits who had power over the luck and livelihood of the group. The women on these occasions often assume a dominant role and behave lewdly, and as part of this reversal or normal behaviour they wear men's clothes. Such rituals of rebellion, it is claimed, by canalizing social tensions, perpetuate the established systems of political organization.[1] We cannot expect to piece together the frag-
764 mentary evidences of Irish folk customs to make a coherent pattern, yet it is clear that the cathartic extravagances of the wakes not only served to dissipate overcharged tensions but were closely concerned with ancestral spirits and the perpetuation of the life of the community. Despite the emphasis on tobacco, which was, one supposes, a substitute for some forgotten magic substance, there are many hints of old custom in the names and rites of the wake games. Did the tobacco pipes, one wonders, take the place of offerings of potsherds when locally-made pottery ceased to be available? It is interesting to find that cheese is regarded as a necessary part of the food offered at wakes, for cheese is now rarely eaten by Irish countryfolk though we know that it was once an essential part of the summer diet.

Many superstitious customs pursued the corpse to the burying ground. The chairs on which the coffin rested were shaken in all directions before it was lifted off, and it was customary for those following the coffin to take some protective substance such as salt in the pocket, for 'there is never a funeral but the other people are at it, too, walking along behind'.[2] With the

[1] Max Gluckman, *Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa*, 24.
[2] C. M. Arensberg, *The Irish Countryman*, 216.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

OLD PISHROGUES

The whistle of the 7.15 now replaced cock-crow. But if it were indeed true that peasant values had perished entirely and that the rural population was transformed into the moronic cattle-herders of Filson Young's *Ireland at the Cross-Roads*, then this book could not have been written. Luckily a mountain farmer will still relate time to nature and refer to a moment of summer twilight, in a memorable phrase quoted by Dr. James Delargy, as 'the time when the dew was thinking of falling'. The wonder is that so much lore and so many relics of pre-famine days have survived. Yet the term 'old pishrogues' which is applied to all varieties of witchcraft and fairy lore—even if sometimes used in awe rather than contempt—shows that these things are now regarded objectively and are no longer an accepted part of social life. Superstitious practices tend to be carried out in secret and to be resorted to only when more rational methods have been tried and found wanting. Many of the old customs, however, have had their life prolonged by children's games, the seasonal bonfires and May Queens becoming their amusements.

Most of the pishrogues relate to fairies and to trees, wells and stones; and that these elder faiths have their roots in a very remote pre-agricultural phase of human evolution is attested by their very general observance among primitive people. As an example we may take the South African Bushmen, one of the lowliest branches of the human family. In a recent report from G. P. van der Post's expedition to the Kalahari we read that in the heart of the Bushman country there are sacred hills which are regarded as the home of very ancient spirits. Van der Post was told that 'right on the top of the central hill there was a spring of water and beside it a tree which bore the fruit of knowledge, and close by the tree a rock with deep marks where the greatest spirit of all had knelt to pray'.[1] The sacred hill-tops, the ancestral spirits, the well of water, the 'gentle' tree and the cup-marked stone are familiar themes in Irish folk tradition. Throughout western Europe, from the fifth century Council of Arles onwards, churchmen denounced those 'who offer vows to trees, or wells, or stones'. The great religions have had to come to terms with such cults, in Monsoon Asia as

[1] *The Times* (14th December, 1955).

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

in Europe, and the emphasis on different elements of the complex naturally varies with regional circumstances and traditions. In Ireland the trees which the elder faiths had endowed with magic qualities were all small trees and shrubs—especially the rowan, holly, elderberry and whitethorn—and the evidence of archaeology and palaeobotany is that these plants first became common in the prehistoric landscape as weeds of cultivation following forest clearance by early cultivators. Thus they would have become symbols of the farming year, their white blossoms a sign of spring and the end of killing frosts, their red berries a token of the fulfilment of harvest and the promise of renewed life. At first sight one may wonder why the thorn tree should have been singled out for special attention, for it is ubiquitous in the lowland landscapes. The hedgerow thorns, of course, are newcomers, and they may be hacked with impunity, but woe betide the man who damages a fairy thorn, that is one not planted by man but growing on its own in the fields or on some ancient cairn or rath. They are to be found in every part of Ireland, but to see the fairy thorn in full majesty one should go to the naked hillsides where it stands in splendid isolation against the stone dykes and the bare hills (Fig. 89). As with the sacred groves of China, not even fallen dead branches which would serve as firewood should be removed. I have

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FIG. 89. Fairy thorns. A cluster of 'gentle bushes' near Slieve Gullion, Co. Armagh: 'If you were in there on the hottest day it would starve you.'

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

believe that many examples were ground out in much the same way before the sign of the cross replaced that of the circle. Cup-marked stones are commonly found in megalithic graves, on standing stones and Bronze Age cists, both in the British Isles and further afield. Some of the larger bullauns were certainly mortars, and very similar 'knocking stones' were used until recent times for preparing barley meal by pounding the grain with a beetle or maul (Fig. 90). To judge from the frequency with which one finds a knocking stone in the ruins of an old clachan it was one of the communal possessions of such a settlement. Old specimens, more especially when the basins are sunk in an outcrop of rock, are frequently found to hold water, and they are then regarded as 'wells', the water being held efficacious as a cure for warts. That such rock-basins have magic powers is illustrated by the following reference to a site in Scotland. On the Loch Avon side of Cairngorm is a shelving rock bearing hand-made basins about a foot wide and correspondingly deep: 'sitting on them is said to be efficacious in cases of barrenness.'[1]

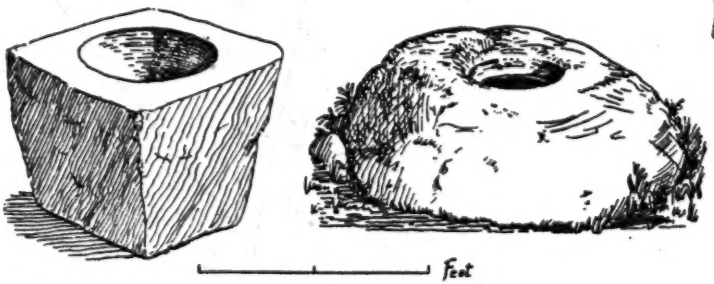

FIG. 90. Knocking stone and bullaun. Both Co. Antrim.

It is an interesting illustration of the pagan associations of cup-marks, and of the success of the symbol of the cross, that their use survived in folk practice only as cursing stones. Smooth pebbles resting in certain stone basins are turned three times against the sun. There are many examples in the west, some

[1] A. Mitchell, *The Past in the Present*, 265.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

234 newly-calved cow should be milked on to a piece of metal
825 placed in the pail. Offerings of the 'beastlings' were poured in the raths and at the roots of fairy thorns, to appease the fairies. When taking a drink out of doors, the old countryman will casually spill a portion of the draught on the earth as a complimentary libation to the good people. 'When a cow fell sick through fairy malice, it was formerly by no means an uncommon practice, in the west of Ireland, to devote the ailing animal to St. Martin. The ceremony was performed by letting a few drops of blood from the cow in honour of the saint.'[1] Cows which, for no apparent reason, are not thriving are said to be
[172] elf-shot. The elf-stones or fairy-darts which are supposed to have caused the mischief are prehistoric flint arrowheads such as can be picked up in the fields. One of the tricks of the cow-doctor who is called in, and who keeps a few arrowheads handy, is to produce one by sleight of hand from the flank of the ailing beast. Or counter-magic can be worked by means of a flint arrowhead which must not be allowed to touch the ground after it has been found. The cow-doctor uses sympathetic magic in curing calves believed to be suffering from intestinal knots by drawing apart over the animal's back the loose ends of a string tied in a complicated witch-knot or 'bat', of the type which comes undone when pulled. But as always he must work the magic correctly, for if the knot is not resolved another one is tied
789 inside the calf.
234 Hanging in the byre one sometimes sees a flint pebble sus-
[823] pended on a string through a natural hole. It is a witch-stone, protecting the cows from milk-stealers, and it may owe its virtue to the flint or to its symbolic ever-watching eye. In the
● [171] Ardenne a holed flint hung in the stable is believed to preserve the horses from nightmares,[2] and nearer home in the Yorkshire dales holed stones known as ring-stones protected the cows from the evil eye. 'Blessings on all that I can see' is the traditional formula to use when one enters a byre. An ill-disposed person could, merely by looking at it, 'blink' a cow so that its milk would yield no butter. The cow could be cured by burning under its nose a portion of the blinker's clothes

[1] Wood-Martin, *Elder Faiths*, 2, 6.
[2] H. H. Turney-High, *Ch'teau-Gérrad* 53(19), 292.

182 The world at large is not interested in the particular ante-
551 cedents of a man and the islanders recognize this in their
use of surnames with the outside world. The old 'family'
611 or clan names placed a man in his wider kinship group in
the days when this was important—it no longer matters
today. Within the community the naming system des-
cribed above distinguishes a man from other men and
places him in his immediate kin group. It helps to establish
his descent. Research in small communities in Western
societies may reveal similar systems serving similar ends
but based on different diacritical criteria.[8]

Notes

113 [1] J. M. Synge, *Four Plays and The Aran Islands*, Oxford, 1962, pp. 263f.

[2] Brief ethnographical details of Tory Island can be found in J. R. Fox, 'The Vanishing Gael,' *New Society*, Vol. I, No. 2, 1962.

551 [3] The second and subsequent names, when in Gaelic, are in the genitive. Some English names are Gaelicized and given a genitive form. I make no claims for the correctness of the spelling of the names given here (Irish spelling is pretty fluid), except that they are the forms recognized by literate islanders. I could not have made
[115] any headway with the Tory naming system and genealogies without the patient help of Máire Nic Fhlaithbheartaigh bean Aodha Uí Dhubhghain, Pádraig Óg Mac Ruadhraigh, and Aodh Ó Dubhghain.

[4] See Synge's comment on the use of the surname and the 'Mac' prefix. In the 'ceremonial' names on Tory both Mac and Ó are used, but when a surname is included in the 'personal' set, these prefixes are not usually used.

[5] This could be Paddy-John Uí Fhlaithbheartaigh—roughly Paddy John O'Flaherty. The pronunciation would be the same.

551 [6] A fuller analysis of the structure and functions of these descent
611 groups is in preparation. They seem to be mainly concerned with landholding—as a consequence of the equal division of land amongst all a man's (or woman's) heirs, and the system of keeping land in trust for migrants. Their other functions lie mainly in the sphere of mutual support amongst members in times of crisis.

[7] This distribution could only occur by chance in one sample out of 20: $\chi^2_{(1)} = 4{\cdot}30$: $p = < {\cdot}05$.

551 [8] The Welsh system of stringing ancestral names together with
171 'ap' is obviously similar to the Tory method, but the Welsh, I believe, used only male names. Mr. Andrew Dunsire tells me that in some Scottish coastal villages a man will be known by the boat he owns, his children inheriting this epithet. In some working-class communities which I know in England a system similar to that on Tory operates. A man may be known as 'Mary's Tom' and his son as 'Mary's Tom's Johnnie,' etc. Synge notes the use of occupations as marks of distinction in Wales and comments on the lack of occupational differentiation on the Aran Islands which makes this method impossible. In some rural communities a man is known by the name of his farm. W. M. Williams in *The Sociology of an English Village* (Routledge, 1956) gives examples of this. See also his fascinating discussion of Naming and Family Continuity, pp. 79–82 and 229f. The contrast with the Tory system is marked, however, in that one can, in Gosforth, move from 'side' to 'side' in choice of names—both surnames and Christian names being used.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

size from fourths to quarter-acres, located along the quarter that his community fronts. As a result of past inheritance and purchase, however, five Castle villagers own plots in one or two other quarters, as do five High and two Low villagers. Before field building commenced, the most extensive and fertile soils were found on the terraces; shallow and less widespread soils were situated just south of the terrace crest, while the back of the island was, and still is, mostly limestone pavement. Landholders originally were assigned equal acreage in each of these three areas, so that no one would have an advantage over his neighbors, and this pattern still predominates. The quarters are separated from one another by high, thick stone fences which run almost the length of Inis Beag, and, from west to east, they are known as Quarter of the *Phoillín* (derivation unknown), Quarter of the Ridge of Huts (after an ancient *clochán* settlement behind High Village), Quarter of the Castle, and Quarter of the Lake; they embrace, respectively, 271, 261, 240, and 263 acres.

Fifty-nine of the 71 householders in Inis Beag hold or own land, and one of these is an absentee holder. If an individual possesses four or fewer acres, he is regarded as landless—"a man of few gardens"—and 11 men are so designated. Two as yet unresolved disputes over the possession of land when resolved will add two other householders to the landless category, unless the property is divided in some manner among all four litigants by the Irish Land Commission. The folk prefer to rent rather than to own land, so that the commission will supervise matters relating to inheritance "fairly" and with little cost to the litigants should a dispute arise. The average sized Inis Beag holding is 15.7 acres, or approximately a croggery, and 25 islanders hold this amount of land; in addition, one person has 40 acres, three 32 acres, one 28 acres, eight 24 acres, eight 20 acres, four 12 acres, and nine 8 acres. Below is a chart summing up ownership data by village:

	Landholders and Owners	*Landless Householders*	*Average Sized Holding (in acres)*
Low Village	17	9	11.0
High Village	14	1	18.2
Castle Village	15	2	19.0
Terrace Village	13	1	16.4

The disproportionate number of landless persons in Low are, for the most part, either descendants of fisherfolk who centered in that community in earlier times and did not possess land, or siblings of landholders who chose not to emigrate. They support themselves by craft work, keeping tourists, fishing, managing shops, and working for the government, among other pursuits.

Farming

There is neither legendary nor historical evidence of when soil building commenced in Inis Beag, but the process is an archaic one and is practiced in other communities along the Atlantic seaboard where appropriate seaweeds are available. Today, between 45 and 50 percent of the land surface of the island is

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

underclothing retained. The latter practice reflects extreme modesty as well as the need for warmth. Islanders have an obsessive fear of nakedness which permits them, after infancy, to bathe only their feet, hands, and face and precludes bathing in the sea and the use of bathtubs.

Crafts

Of the several crafts practiced in Inis Beag, only three are strictly income instead of combined subsistence-income activities: the manufacture of *curach* by four men, the mass production of stockings by four girls in the factory at the coast guard station, and the fashioning of miniature canoes by a single man. Sweaters, woven belts, cowhide shoes, and the small multi-colored shawls are made both for local wear and for export. Most of the exported sweaters are sold to a particular mainland firm for resale, as are all of the model canoes, and the factory is sponsored by Gaeltacht Eireann which markets the stockings produced. Other craft commodities are sold by the folk directly to consumers, most of whom are tourists.

The long rowing canoe of Inis Beag is distributed widely along the west coast of Ireland, from Cos. Donegal to Kerry, and its seaworthy qualities as well as the rowing skill of the crews which sail it are renowned. One of a number of varieties of the coracle, which has a heritage extending back to the Mesolithic, it is built of deal and oak lathes and covered with tarred canvas (see Fig 10). Before canvas was introduced, untanned seal, cow, and horse hides were used for covering, and these were reported from a nearby island less than 100 years ago. The *curach* is approximately 20 feet in length, has a high pointed nose, is round bellied and lacks a keel, draws less than 6 inches of water, and is rowed with narrow 10-feet-long oars. These oars are bladeless for use in rough seas and are pivoted on single tholepins rather than in oarlocks. The looms of the oars overlap, so that oarsmen must pull cross-handed, and on long journeys a lug sail is hoisted to relieve the crew. For the neophyte, rowing a *curach* cross-handed in a heavy sea can be even more abusive of the hands than rebuilding a gateway in a stone fence. Most canoes hold three men—are "three-oared"—but two-, four-, and even five-men *curach* were or are used. Loads up to a ton and a half can be accommodated, and trussed asses, sheep, and horses sometimes are transported in them.

Forty-two householders in Inis Beag own three-men canoes, among whom three have additional two-oared *curach*. The craft are stored upside down in "cots" on either side of the strand along the margins of the common land, although Terrace villagers use a small beach along the northeast coast of the island; they are carried between the cots and the water upside down on the shoulders of the crew, and in that position resemble gigantic beetles. Two Inis Beag men are at work building canoes most of the time, and when they are not busy at this task they construct furniture for local sale. Two other men manufacture *curach* occasionally, and another two who once built them have discontinued the practice. No canoe makers are found elsewhere in the region; therefore, Inis Beag artisans serve the

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

The knit sweater called a "ganzie," is not a traditional item of wear, as is commonly asserted by writers, but was introduced in the 1890s as a cottage industry by the Congested Districts Board, which sent instructors to Inis Beag to teach the women there the manner of knitting the intricate patterns. Only children wear the ganzie, for men always have preferred a dark sweater of simple design which is indigenous to the island. The patterns bear such euphonious names as "crooked road," "figure eight," "double diamond," "rosebud," "honeycomb," and "blackberry," and most of them are common to the rest of Ireland, the British Isles, and other parts of Europe. The term ganzie, in fact, undoubtedly derives from the Channel island, Guernsey. A widely held belief that each Inis Beag family has its own distinctive sweater pattern, comparable to the Scottish tartan, by which its drowned members are identified is unfounded. Seventeen women knit for the mainland company, which supplies them with yarn, and are paid between 2 pounds and 2 pounds and 10 shillings by weight for each sweater. Some are able to knit a ganzie in a week, but others take two or three weeks; one woman made 41 sweaters during 1959. A girl working steadily at the knitting factory can earn slightly more in a week than one knitting a ganzie in that time, but most girls choose to knit sweaters because they can be at home where their task seems less tedious. Some women prefer to sell their sweaters to tourists and can on occasion dispose of a ganzie for as much as 6 pounds, but these women must purchase their own yarn, and marketing is much less secure as tourists seldom come into island homes. At present, the finest ganzies are knitted by women in Co. Donegal, a fact which Inis Beag women admit privately.

The woven belt and cowhide shoes of Inis Beag folk have an ancient heritage, just as has the *curach*. It is not known when the belt, or *crios*, was introduced into Ireland, but it has been worn for centuries by Portuguese seamen. Known as "pampooties," the island style footwear once was worn widely in Ireland, although made from various hides and skins, and a century ago was cut from sealskin in Inis Beag. The term pampootie is of Scandinavian origin, and my wife and I have heard it used among Danish peasants to describe their shoes. Today, a Danish expatriate who has lived in the island for almost a decade supports himself by weaving *crios* on a loom for the folk; he also sells them to visitors and to mainland shops along with woven ties and bookmarks. Although "the Dane" has come to monopolize the production of belts, several women occasionally make them by hand for their menfolk and to sell. The manufacture of *crios* once was largely in the hands of women, and they wore them sewn to their petticoats and tied at the side, but now it is mostly men who wear them. Three yards long and two inches wide, the belt is woven with a multitude of colors and designs and is worn wrapped twice around the body and tucked in at either side of the waist. Elders prefer traditional designs and shun the color green because it is unlucky, but young men are coming to like experimental patterns and all of the basic colors and their many shades. Contrary to popular opinion, there are no family designs. Some persons, however, ask for the same pattern every two or three years when they buy a new *crios* if they believe that it has brought them luck.

Pampooties are favored in Inis Beag because they are ideally suited for wet rocks and frail canoes. The spiked heels of female tourists and visiting emigrants who come ashore in *curach* are viewed with trepidation by crewmen, who are sup-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

inveterate wrack-boomers. The separateness of Terrace villagers was made most apparent at the time of the shipwreck through the aggression, both overt and covert, directed against them by their fellows.

The behavior of Low villagers, on the other hand, is often the opposite of that of Terrace people less than a mile away; for instance, the folk of Low are the latest risers and milkers, the least industrious, and the most prone to spend time in the pubs. They claim to be descendants of the earliest immigrants in the seventeenth century and are the most boastful of family genealogies. However, most of the landless householders live in Low and as such are held in low repute by landed villagers. People here are the most receptive to tourists, and the two pubs which attract outsiders and the several private homes in which tourists may lodge all are located in Low. It is said that Terrace folk do not need and are indifferent to tourists, whereas Low villagers could not survive without them, either economically or psychologically. Although islanders today visit nearby islands and the mainland less than did their forebears at the turn of the century, the people of Low are considered the most traveled, past and present, of the local population.

As for attitudes directed outward, most islanders regard the culture of Inis Thiar as more traditional than their own. Often heard is the assertion that 70 years ago the inhabitants of the two islands were almost alike as to behavior and beliefs, but the coming of lighthouse and coast guard families, and a permanent curate after 1919, to Inis Beag introduced successive changes which gradually widened the cultural gap between the two. Another factor of importance hindering acculturation in Inis Thiar has been its lack of good landing facilities for visitors to come ashore; the steamer must stand off the jetty of Inis Thiar in the unprotected and often turbulent sound and be met by canoes, whereas it can approach closely the strand of Inis Beag, between the jetty and a point of land, where under most weather conditions it is relatively calm.

Visitors to Inis Beag also hold the same opinion of the two cultures, and the most often made comparison between the islands is the Irish spoken in them. The people of Inis Beag and Inis Thiar recognize slight differences in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation between the two speech communities, but they seldom rank their respective proficiencies, unless outsiders in one island assert that the Gaelic spoken in the other is "purer." Once a tourist angered visiting Inis Thiar fishermen in my presence by publicly pronouncing that the Irish in Inis Beag is superior, and that he would send his children here to learn Gaelic and then to Inis Thiar to learn English; the tongue-in-check statement was prompted by a discussion of the linguistic skills of the publican in the neighboring island, who is called "the English speaker" because of the rapidity of his speech and chronic misuse of esoteric English words. Indigenous nativists are far more numerous and militant in Inis Thiar than in Inis Beag, and the anger of the fishermen reflected pride in their own culture and their belief that it is more traditional than that of Inis Beag.

Inis Thiar folk are thought by their neighbors to the east to be more industrious and extroverted than themselves. They are believed to rise earlier, work longer and more energetically with fewer breaks for contemplation or gossip with

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

556
tunity to create additional capital; they are content to rest on their psychological
[157] laurels, are limited in their aspirations, and are indolent. They betray a smugness
[124] of attitude much resented by their less prestigeful fellows. A woman spoke contemptuously of the "great estates" boasted of by these men, when she discussed with me the many land disputes that she had witnessed during her lifetime.

554 When one asks the folk to rank prestige symbols and the positions of
556 individuals in the status hierarchy, the only consensus which emerges is the
423 placing of land and capital at the apex of the rank order of symbols, the assigning of men who possess these in greatest quantity to the top of the hierarchy, and the placing of landless men at the bottom. Least prestigeful among the landless are those who are descendants of fisherfolk, most of whose families were recent migrants to Inis Beag. An example of the verbal abuse to which they are subjected is a remark made to one of them by the king in a heated argument, who said, "Why don't you spend your time gathering periwinkles like your father?"; the man replied with equal venom, "Who was your father, a king?" Other prestige symbols delineated by the folk, although not mentioned by all and variously ranked, are advanced education, prestigeful kin abroad, economic skills, and singing, dancing, and storytelling abilities. Strength and courage occasionally are cited, but they are considered symbols of a past era (which nativism and primitivism make difficult to assess) and have come to lose much of their significance.

554 Only one family in the island prides itself on its material possessions,
556 because of the influence of the householder's brother in the United States who
[123] sends remittances, so it is said, and often visits Inis Beag for lengthy stays. I was asked to take photographs of this family, whose members posed before various pieces of modern furniture and appliances, to be sent to relatives—the only such
[356] request ever made of me. There are a few families, however, which pride themselves on the neatness and cleanliness of their houses and streets and the appearance
[171] of their members, and they are apt to denigrate families which are slovenly. The
[184] lack of emphasis on material possessions in Inis Beag presents a startling contrast to the situation which prevails in most of the Western world, including many peasant societies and the mainland Irish; equally contrasting is the apparent lack of opprobrium attached to doing relief work on the roads and receiving the dole.

555 Although 28 islanders have received some secondary education during the
871 past 15 years (excluding priests and nuns), only 2 have attended university—both of them before the Second World War at University College, Dublin. Two women and a man have become teachers, and the former have returned to Inis Beag to teach in the national school. Most of the advanced students today are preparing to teach or nurse or are gaining technical skills, and it is not expected by their parents that they will return to the island to live permanently. Families are boastful of their members with advanced education, and those families without such representation often urge their children to do better in the local school, and try to muster financial support for their high school education if scholarships are not forthcoming. I was told by a man disgusted with the lack of interest in school shown by his son, "The man who uses a pen is better off than the man who uses a
567 spade or trammel net." Prestige also is gained through having a close relative
793 become a nun or priest or achieve success in the business or professional world,
[555]

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

persons considered overly superstitious. Interesting to note here is the fact that even before the beginning of this century, strength of belief in the pagan supernatural varied among the folk.

Three water dwellers found in the ocean surrounding Inis Beag are the mermaid, sea spirit, and water horse. At least one and maybe three mermaids are associated with particular locations along the coastline of the island. This spirit usually is found sitting on a rock with her fish tail in the water and combing her long hair, although she has been seen hovering over the surface of the sea in a "robe of mist." Discussion of her in the pubs always induces embarrassment among the men, because her perfectly formed female upper body is nude and not always hidden by her tresses; she appears to delight in exposing herself to the puritanical folk. The sea spirit is called the "headless body" for the reason that his seaweed covered hulk lacks any appendages. Like the seal who bears a human soul, he favors following in the wake of *curach*—bobbing up and down in the water and staring balefully at the seamen with huge eyes. Only by dropping an object containing gold into the ocean deeps, which the spirit finds irresistible, can his pursuit be impeded short of rowing back to the island. My wife and I brought to Inis Beag a foot-high statue of a troll, purchased two years before in Norway, made of moss with large glass eyes, which we hung from the wall of our kitchen (as we had from the dashboard of our car) as a good luck charm. It aroused excitement among fishermen who visited us because of its resemblance to the headless body; one man reasoned that this being must inhabit all of the northern seas, and probably arouses equal consternation among Scottish and Scandinavian seafarers. The water horse is a demon counterpart of the mermaid, with black body of a steed and tail of a giant fish. Until 40 years ago, it lived in the fresh water lake of Inis Beag, where it was seen on certain nights traveling abreast the surface with its head held high and mane waving in the wind. Now it is seen only at sea and infrequently at great distance.

The single pookah of Inis Beag resides in a Copper-Bronze Age tumulus (see Fig. 12), which became a medieval cemetery with rough headstones still in place; located on the western margin of the common land, it is known as the Hill of Ferns. In the Middle Ages, the church urged systematic reinterpretation of Christian and pagan elements (It was advocated as early as 601 by Pope Gregory VII in a letter to priests who were proselytizing the primitive Britons.). This policy is attested in Inis Beag and neighboring islands not only by Christian graveyards being located contiguous to pagan ones, but by Christian church buildings incorporating Druidic temples and Celtic holy wells being appropriated by Christian worshippers. During the day, the "dog of the tumulus," as this demon is called, will twist the limbs of unwary individuals who chance to fall asleep on the mound, and at night it is known to race across the sands of strand and common land, altering its size at will from that of a small dog to that of a bull, to frighten those who might be passing. It appears that Irish emigrants carried both the mermaid and pookah abroad with them as early as the seventeenth century, at least to the West Indies. In doing research among the "Black Irish" of Montserrat during 1965, 1966, and last year, I discovered a mermaid with white skin who guards a pot of gold buried on top of Chance's Mountain, and a pookah in the form of a

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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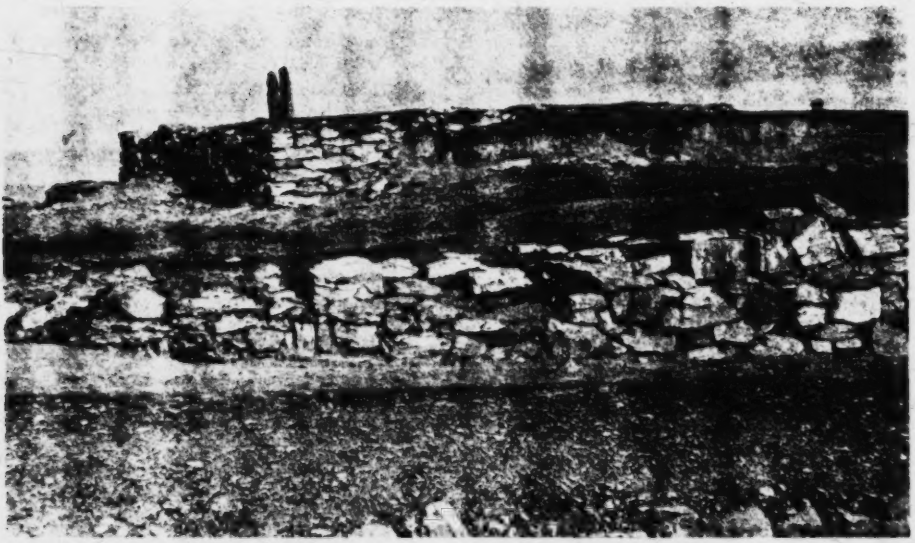

Figure 12. Copper-Bronze Age tumulus—home of the pookah

776 black dog which roams the road by the Catholic church and cemetery in the
[771] village of St. Patrick, altering its size instantaneously (Messenger 1967:37–38).

764 Witchcraft once flourished in Inis Beag, so it is held, but today only the
178 casting of the evil eye still is practiced. The most common witch of the past was an ugly old woman, called a "hag witch," who was native to Inis Beag or a transient nighttime intruder from nearby islands and the mainland. She was able to fly through the air swiftly, make herself invisible, assume any size or shape, enter the body of an animal, and perpetrate black magic. Her favorite animal familiar was the rabbit and her favorite target the cow, whose milk she purloined after
754 midnight from beasts pastured at the back of the island. Like the trooping fairies,
753 she too stole the souls of children and left ailing changelings in their stead. When
755 it was suspected by parents that a child was a changeling rather than their human
855 offspring, it was customary to throw it into the fireplace or burn the bedding on which it lay in order to retrieve the departed soul; if the perpetrator were a witch, she would leap from the flames with a "wild shriek" and vanish, leaving the restored child in perfect health in her place. I was told in Inis Thiar of islanders there who bear scars from being burned when their souls were rescued by this expediency.

754 Three Inis Beag persons are accused of possessing the evil eye and thus
[624] are shunned by their fellows. Such a witch is known by a disfigurement in or near
[576] his left eye, from which the malignant force emanates, and by his ability to cause

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

times are recognized as recently deceased islanders, but more often they are "strangers" from another generation or another region of Ireland. They appear and disappear without warning and travel silently singly or in small groups. Usually they pay little or no heed to the living who chance to observe them, but they will attack those who have wronged them and occasionally others for seemingly no reason. A man told me of being beaten severely by three unknown men, obviously shades, early one evening at the back of the island; he might have been killed but for the intervention of two women, also strangers to him. At one time, persons who feared being assaulted by vengeful or capricious ghosts carried coals to protect themselves. The folk believe that shades are souls of the dead in Purgatory, which embraces the earth as well as a spiritual locus. While on earth, they do penance by laboring at economic tasks—carrying seaweed, planting gardens, and fishing—near their former homes, and the work that they accomplish is undone once they disappear.

Christianity touches on the evil eye in more ways than providing the magical incantation, "God bless you.", which automatically opposes the power of God to that of the witch. Many islanders explain the evil eye by positing the presence of both the deity and the Devil in each human body. God rests on the right side and urges a person to do good deeds, while Satan rests on the left and tempts him to commit sins. In most individuals, the deity dominates the body much of the time, but in the case of one with the evil eye, the Devil somehow has gained perpetual ascendancy and transmits his destructive power through the left eye of the person. It is the constant flowing of malignant power from within which causes the disfigurement in or near the left eye of the witch. The association of evil with the left is a phenomenon widely distributed among the peoples of the world, as is the linking of evil with black. Ghost masks are painted black to symbolize their evil nature by the Anang of Nigeria, and sacrifices to deity and ancestors at shrines are made with the right hand, and to ghosts, witches, and the spirit of sorcery with the left. In Inis Beag, people who have swarthy skin, black hair, and brown eyes, although not considered witches, are thought to possess evil power of some sort and are to be avoided. A curate possessing these physical traits who served in the island recently was mistrusted and shunned whenever possible even though a man chosen by God Almighty." An interesting conjecture is how successful would be the research in Inis Beag of an anthropologist with dark complexion and hair and a cast in his brown left eye.

The afterworld of the Celts, known as the Isle of the Blest or the Land of Youth, lay to the west of Ireland. It has been sighted by a few fortunate Inis Beag fishermen, either low-lying on the horizon with lights sparkling when it has risen from the sea, as it does periodically, or in the ocean deeps with the spires of its buildings and their tolling bells near the surface. This is a forested land inhabited by souls of the dead, and by fairies who travel to and from the mainland in "fairy ships." Few islanders now syncretize the Isle of the Blest with the Christian Heaven, as was common a century ago, but there are those who claim to have seen fairy ships from there skirt Inis Beag headed for the mainland. These are masted schooners carrying lights with no signs of life on their decks, which heave into sight and vanish instantaneously and can move far more swiftly than their counter-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

to procure stout and brandy (ostensibly a general purpose medicine in this case) in disguised containers to be consumed at home. The drinking of the men takes place, for the most part, in the pubs and at parties, and seldom is it indulged in to the extent that the imbibers become physically incapacitated. There were no cases of alcoholism in Inis Beag during 1959, according to the nurse. Although drinking obviously is done to combat depression and boredom, dissolve feelings of shyness and inferiority, alleviate the sense of sin and guilt, and overcome secretiveness which limits extroversion, the folk defend the practice by claiming that it makes them more articulate and convivial and thus better able to sing, dance, converse with one another, and tell stories. The often used phrases "to give us courage" and "great gas" connote just these benefits. In Ireland today, there are nearly half-a-million members of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Society—founded in that country 125 years ago—who have "taken the pledge" not to drink spirits in any form; they wear a small badge shaped like a shield which bears the emblem of the Sacred Heart. Twelve "Pioneers" in Inis Beag have taken a lifetime pledge and about 30 others a two year pledge not to imbibe. Most of these persons are old men, women, and boys. Young and middle-aged men who are members of the society are the objects of a good deal of indirect ridicule and direct jesting.

Folklore

As a result of acculturation, the Inis Beag esthetic tradition today is not nearly so rich as it was two generations ago, nor has it ever been as rich as those found in many other peasant areas of Ireland. The principal esthetic forms are folklore, music, and dance; lacking are the graphic and plastic arts, and of the crafts already considered only the knitting of ganzies, the crocheting of shawls, and *crios* making transcend sheer utility in their manufacture, according to the evaluation of island artisans. Myths, legends, folktales, and anecdotes among prose narratives, and song texts and proverbs, are the predominant genres of oral literature. There is no drama, while poetry, riddles, and jokes seldom are recited.

"Along the western shores of Ireland and Scotland . . . is preserved the oldest vernacular literature in Europe, north and west of the Alps. Along this tattered cultural frontier . . . [are] the last remnants of the most venerable body of orally preserved tradition in western Europe" (Delargy 1957:178). The Inis Beag folk share this body of folklore, and storytelling always has loomed large in the lives of the people. However, it had disappeared formally from the island by the time that my wife and I came, and we were never able to attend a traditional storytelling session, but had to reconstruct its institutionalized characteristics by plumbing the memory of one of the two aged narrators still alive. There are two types of Irish storytellers: the *scéalaí*, who recounts myths and legends of the mythological, Ulster, Fenian, and historical cycles, as well as ancient folktales; and the *seanchaí*, "who makes a specialty of local tales, family-sagas, or genealogies, social-historical tradition, and the like, and can recount many tales of a short realistic type about fairies, ghosts, and other supernatural beings (Delargy 1945:6). In Inis Beag, the former type of storyteller was always male and the latter usually

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

and coast guard personnel. Only four tunes are played by Inis Beag accordionists to accompany dancing.

Instrumentalists, lilters, and singers traditionally performed individually; music was played by a fiddler or flutist and sung by a lilter only to serve solo and figure dancers, and a singer never was joined by others in chorus or accompanied by an instrument. But now the dancers, young and old alike, choose to dance to the lively jigs and reels of the *céilí* band, which plays modern Irish "country dance music." My wife and I discovered that the folk preferred our *céilí* band records for dancing, and were reticent about performing to the music of our many records of fiddling, piping, and flute and tin whistle playing of exceptional quality. On several occasions, we played jazz and classical recordings to groups assembled in our home, to which the islanders listened politely but indifferently. Our *céilí* band records seemed to be quite as acceptable as an accordion at dances and in the pub, and I frequently shared equally with an instrumentalist the time spent in furnishing music for a night long party.

Of the Irish song tradition, Donal O'Sullivan writes: "There is, indeed, a consensus of informed opinion as to its exceeding beauty. . . . In sheer abundance, also, it is probably not surpassed by that of any nation of comparable area and population: for this small and thinly inhabited island has yielded . . . many thousands of melodies of unusual diversity—all of them the anonymous product of the people . . ." (O'Sullivan 1961:5). The Inis Beag folk, as in the case of their music, share but a small portion of this vast body of song. Only a few songs sung publicly by less than a dozen islanders are in Irish, and these are predominantly local compositions. Most of the songs have texts in English and are common to the mainland as well, and of these but a handful are true folk songs—"anonymous product of the people"—rather than broadsides (printed, sold, and memorized) of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Tunes and songs, just as tale types and motifs, of the Irish often are shared with British and Continental neighbors, and it is hard to know their points of origin and paths of diffusion. Some islanders believe that a few of their songs—such as "The Pretty Maid Milking Her Cow"—were obtained by overhearing the fairies at play. Only one composer is active in the vicinity of Inis Beag at the present time; he is a young man from Inis Thiar who excels at composing songs in Irish based on recent events of importance in and near the two islands. A song of his, which describes the incidents arising out of the grounding of the steamer on a sand bar off Inis Thiar several years ago, is one of the most sung ballads in the region.

Singing is a popular pastime in Inis Beag, particularly among men in the pubs, and several islanders of both sexes have outstanding voices by Irish standards. I tape recorded only 38 songs (13 in Gaelic) and found their major themes to be sentimental, patriotic, and humorous—stressing death, unrequited love, emigration and the parting of relatives and friends, conflict in various forms with the English, and lives of the political "martyrs." Love songs, lullabies, humorous songs, religious songs, laments, drinking songs, and songs of occupation (such as ploughing, milking, and spinning) are the major indigenous Irish folk song categories (O'Sullivan 1961:39), but some are absent and others are underrepresented in Inis Beag. Also absent are carols, as well as boat songs like those of the Gaelic speaking Scottish fishermen.

17: Messenger E-4,5 (1958-1966)1971 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inis Beag

the major source of their livelihood; production is mainly for subsistence and is carried on with a simple technology, using the digging stick, spade, and scythe as primary implements; the island folk participate in a money economy, but barter still persists; a low standard of living prevails, and the birth rate is high; the family is of central importance, and marriage figures prominently as a provision of economic welfare; the island is integrated into the county and national governments and is subject to their laws; the people have long been exposed to urban influences and have borrowed cultural forms from other rural areas on the mainland, integrating them into a relatively stable system; and, finally, the experience of living under English rule for centuries has created in the islanders an attitude of dependence on—yet hostility toward—government which continues to this day. The only conditions in Inis Beag which run counter to those found in most other peasant communities are low death and illiteracy rates and bilateral, rather than unilineal, descent (although inheritance is patrilineal).

Inis Beag culture also characterizes people of nearby islands, and the traditions of the several together might be regarded as forming a subculture of the total Irish system. Many island customs are shared with rural peasants on the mainland (where numerous regional subcultures exist), and some are part of a broader European matrix. The island has experienced considerable cultural change since the establishment of the Congested Districts Board (forerunner of the Gaeltacht) in 1891 and the growth of tourism in this century. But conditions there still approximate those which must have prevailed two generations ago, and earlier, throughout this region of peasant Ireland.

Inis Beag has a population of approximately 350 persons living in seventy-one "cottages" distributed among four settlements, called "villages." Bordering a "strand" and a large tract of common land on the northeastern side of the island are a series of limestone terraces, separated by water-bearing shales and faced by small cliffs, on which the villages are situated. Most of the arable land is found on this side, where the shales have been broken down by weathering and alien soils deposited by wind and by ice of the Weichsel glacier. Over many generations, the islanders have deepened these soils and created new soils on rock surfaces by adding seaweed, sand, and human manure. On the southwestern side of Inis Beag, known as the "back of the island," limestone pavements slope rather evenly, almost as the gentle dip of the strata, from the crest of the highest terrace to the sea a mile away. The bared surfaces are intersected in all directions by crevices,

17: Messenger E-4,5 (1958-1966)1971 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inis Beag

arose partly out of our desire to alleviate distress and not solely to collect information. We had performed the same role seven years earlier among primitive Nigerians, and for similar reasons. However, the Africans were uninhibited, talked freely with us about sex, and were not offended by what we subsequently wrote.

Another important source of information on sex was the island nurses, who supplied us with accounts of their own observations over an eight-year period and gave us access to pertinent medical records. My wife and I believe that our information is, for the most part, reliable, but that some of it may well be erroneous. This report will, we are afraid, offend and alienate some of our Inis Beag friends, for whom we hold deep affection; they do not comprehend the aims and values of anthropology and may regard our reporting of sexual beliefs and behavior as a breach of friendship and trust. Certainly our findings will be denied by many Irish readers.

More than any other type of research, culture and personality investigations are needed in Ireland today. Social and cultural anthropologists, rural sociologists, folklorists, and geographers in small numbers have managed to describe and analyze the major sociocultural forms of the Irish folk, but personality generalizations, by and large, have been the by-products of research into other areas and have tended to be impressionistic. Some of the most penetrating studies of Irish character have been made "at a distance" and through the analysis of projective systems and narrow units of culture, such as drinking patterns (Bales 1962). Some Irish writers—"intuitive anthropologists" I call them—also have had insightful things to say about Irish character (usually at a distance too, from church and state). What is sorely needed is a holistic community study done by a culture and personality specialist—a person skilled not only in ethnography, social psychology, and psychiatry (and able to administer projective tests), but well versed in Irish history, literature, and contemporary affairs as well.

SEXUAL REPRESSION: ITS MANIFESTATIONS

Both lack of sexual knowledge and misconceptions about sex among adults combine to brand Inis Beag as one of the most sexually naive of the world's societies.

to "our man") be chosen for the task. Earlier, according to island opinion, the same priest had caused to be committed to the "madhouse" a local man who publicly challenged certain of his actions. The unfortunate man was released six months later, as per law, since he was not mentally ill.

Sexual misconceptions are myriad in Inis Beag. The islanders share with most Western peoples the belief that men by nature are far more libidinous than women. The latter have been taught by some curates and in the home that sexual relations with their husbands are a "duty" which must be "endured," for to refuse coitus is a mortal sin. A frequently encountered assertion affixes the guilt for male sexual strivings on the enormous intake of potatoes of the Inis Beag male. (In Nigeria, among the people whom my wife and I studied, women are thought to be more sexually disposed than men and are the repositories of sexual knowledge; it is they who initiate coitus and so pose a threat to their spouses. Nigerian men place the blame on clitoridectomy performed just prior to marriage.) Asked to compare the sexual proclivities of Inis Beag men and women, one mother of nine said, "Men can wait a long time before wanting 'it,' but we can wait a lot longer." There is much evidence to indicate that the female orgasm is unknown—or at least doubted, or considered a deviant response. One middle-aged bachelor, who considers himself wise in the ways of the outside world and has a reputation for making love to willing tourists, described one girl's violent bodily reactions to his fondling and asked for an explanation; when told the "facts of life" of what obviously was an orgasm, he admitted not realizing that women also could achieve a climax, although he was aware that some of them apparently enjoyed kissing and being handled.

Inis Beag men feel that sexual intercourse is debilitating, a common belief in primitive and folk societies. They will desist from sex the night before they are to perform a job which will require the expenditure of great energy. Women are not approached sexually during menstruation or for months after childbirth, since they are considered "dangerous" to the male at these times. Returned "Yanks" have been denounced from the pulpit for describing American sexual practices to island youths, and such "pornographic" magazines as *Time* and *Life*, mailed by kin from abroad, have aroused curates to spirited sermon and instruction.

The separation of the sexes, started within the family, is augmented by separation in almost all segments of adolescent and adult activity. Boys and girls are separated to some extent in classrooms, and completely in